UNIVERSITÉ DE GENÈVE
INSTITUT UNIVERSITAIRE DE HAUTES ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES

THE GRECO-BULGARIAN DISPUTE BEFORE THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1925-1927

An Experiment in Peaceful Settlement

THÈSE

présentée à l'Université de Genève
pour l'obtention du grade de docteur ès sciences politiques

par

KRISHNA AHOOJA-PATEL
(INDE)

Thèse No 254

GENÈVE
1974

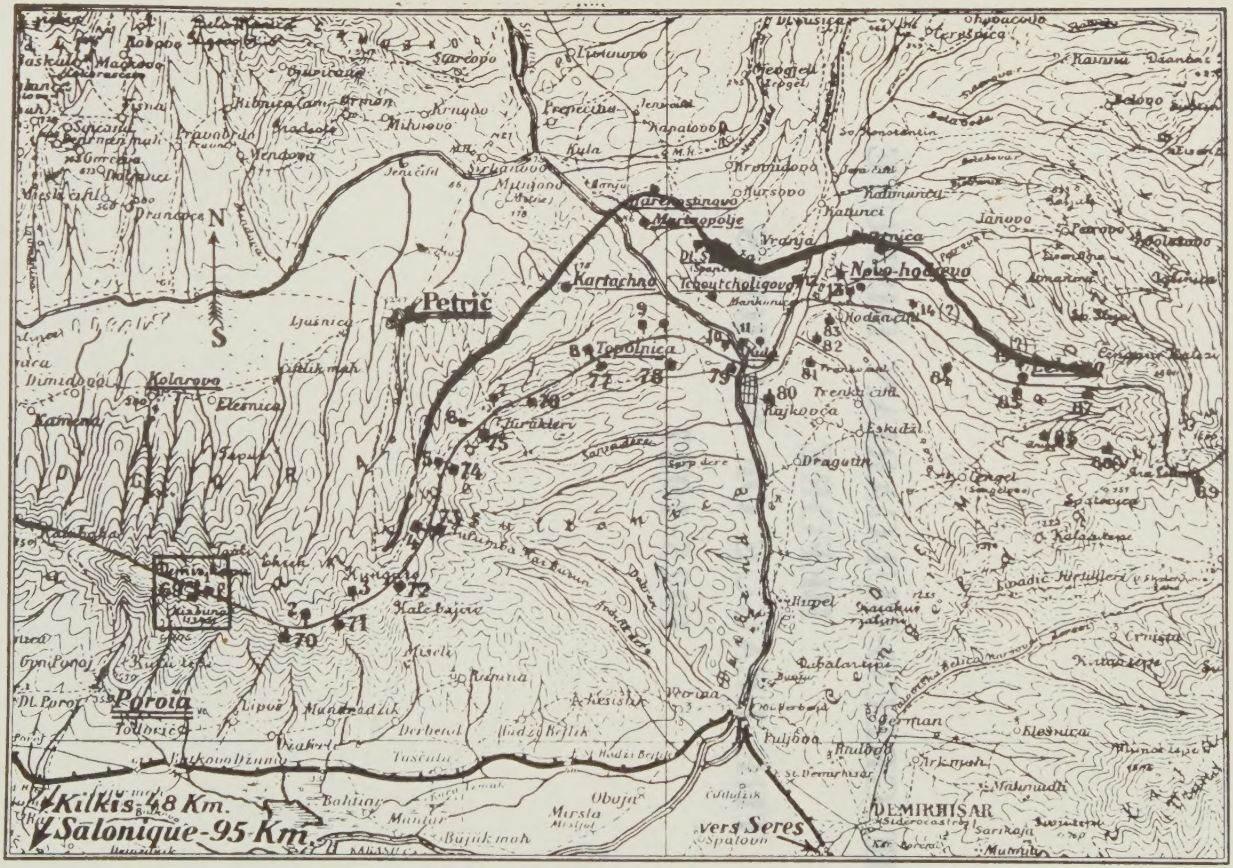
Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/IA41545906_0028

THE GRECO-BULGARIAN DISPUTE BEFORE THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS 1925-1927

LEAGUE OF NATIONS, **COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY INTO THE INCIDENTS ON THE FRONTIER BETWEEN BULGARIA AND GREECE,** Belgrade, November 29th, 1925

THE SCENE OF THE SHOOTING



Doc. No. C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII.

Echelle 1 : 200.000 — 1 cm. = 2 kilom. — 0 1 2 3 4 5 10 15 kilomètres

REFERENCES

Frontier.

Limit of the area occupied by the Greek army.

Greek frontier-post.

Pipernica — Bulgarian villages occupied or damaged.

Bulgarian frontier-post.

Posts of Demir-Kapu, where the initial incident happened.

Note. — The sites of the posts and villages, as well as the limits of the area occupied are only approximative the map being faulty and there being discrepancies between the documents supplied by the two parties.

UNIVERSITÉ DE GENÈVE
INSTITUT UNIVERSITAIRE DE HAUTES ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES

THE GRECO-BULGARIAN DISPUTE BEFORE THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1925-1927

An Experiment in Peaceful Settlement

THÈSE

présentée à l'Université de Genève
pour l'obtention du grade de docteur ès sciences politiques

par

KRISHNA AHOOJA-PATEL
(INDE)

Thèse No 254

GENÈVE
1974

La Commission mixte, composée des doyens des Facultés de Droit, des Lettres, et des Sciences Économiques et Sociales, et du Directeur de l'Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales, sur le préavis de Mme Marlis Steinert, et de MM. Harish Kapur et Jean Siotis, professeurs à l'Institut, autorise l'impression de la présente thèse, sans entendre par là exprimer d'opinion sur les propositions qui y sont énoncées.

Genève, le 1er juin 1973

Pour la Commission Mixte :

Jacques FREYMOND,
Directeur de l'Institut Universitaire.

Thèse N° 254

UNIV.
LEIDEN
BIBL.

To my Parents
(Chaiji & Bauji)

Acknowledgements

Though this thesis is short, my debts are huge. They have accumulated over half of my conscious life. With each revision still more inadequacies of substance and style were brought to the surface. What sustained the spirit through this struggle was the direct and indirect support of many persons. Here I will mention only a few, who stand out as luminous landmarks on this long road.

First and foremost is my gratitude to Professor Jacques Freymond who proposed to me the subject of this thesis "as a tool for intellectual discipline". I am profoundly grateful to Professor Jean Siotis who showed great patience and forebearance in reading various parts of the thesis several times over and saved me from pursuing an infinitely large number of dead ends. My deep appreciation is also due to Professor Harish Kapur who, with a kindly but critical eye, helped me see my way through the "Historical Framework" (Part I).

I am deeply indebted to Mr. J. Field, the Deputy Librarian of the United Nations Library and to Mr. Badr Kasme (Legal and Political Question Room) for their friendly assistance in searching for all relevant, and often even irrelevant, source materials. It was sheer luck to find two excellent editors; Mr. Jack Spector and Mr. Harris Russel who have with their corrections immeasurably improved the manuscript.

It would have been impossible to present the thesis in this neat form without the help of Miss Valerie Webb and Miss Sheila Finn who typed my illegible manuscripts as they passed through their various versions.

Finally, the debt owed to my husband, Surendra J. Patel, I can scarcely hope to compensate. He shared with me the periods of heavy rain, abundant sunshine and thunderous storms. My three sons, meanwhile learnt to grow up under the shadow of the thesis.

Krishna Ahooja-Patel

TABLE OF CONTENTS

			Page
INTRODUCTION			1 - 13
		PART ONE	
		The Historical Framework	14
Chapter I :		The Incident at Demir-Kapu	14
	1.	The Facts	14 - 21
	2.	Escalation: the next three days (19 to 21 October 1925)	22 - 34
Chapter II :		The Origin of the Conflict	35
	1.	Macedonia, the Core of the Conflict	35 - 40
	2.	The Peace Settlements	41
		(a) The Treaty of Neuilly (1920)	41 - 46
		(b) The Provisions of the Treaty	47 - 53
		(c) Subsequent Peace Treaties	54 - 69
Chapter III :		Diplomatic Problings after Demir-Kapu	70
		a. Negotiations: Level I	70 - 72
		b. Negotiations: Level II	73 - 74
		c. Negotiations: Level III	74 - 81
		PART TWO	
		The Dispute before the League of Nations	82
Chapter IV :		The Involvement of the League	83 - 84
	1.	The Problem of Minorities	84 - 92
	2.	The Settlement of Refugees	93 - 105

			Page
Chapter V :		The "Extraordinary" Session of the Council	106
	1.	The Extraordinary Session	107 - 112
	2.	Debates and Diplomacy	113 - 122
	3.	The Rumanian Intervention	122 - 129
	4.	Implementation of 26 October Resolution	129 - 135
Chapter VI :		The Commission of Enquiry	136
	1.	The Withdrawal of Troops	136 - 148
	2.	The Appointment of the Commission of Enquiry	149 - 153
Chapter VII :		The Discussion of the Report of the Commission of Enquiry	154
	1.	The Report of the Commission	154
		(a) The Procedure for its Submission	154 - 156
		(b) The Report	156 - 168
		(i) Measures to Prevent Frontier Incidents	168 - 171
		(ii) Measures to Limit the Consequences of Incidents	171 - 172
		(iii) Measures to enable the League to take Rapid Action	172 - 173
	2.	The Views of the Disputants	174
		a. The Bulgarian View	174 - 179
		b. The Greek case	179 - 186

		Page
Chapter VIII :	The Decision of the Council	187
1.	The "Committee of Three"	187 - 193
2.	The Report of the Council	194 - 200
3.	Contemporary Assessment of the League's Success	201 - 204
4.	The Implementation of the Decision	205 - 206
	a. Indemnities and Reparations	206 - 207
	b. Reorganising of the Frontier	207
	(i) Neutral Officers	207 - 209
	(ii) Conciliation Commission	209 - 211
	(iii) Another Incident	211
	c. Sequel to the Refugee Problem	215 - 221
	PART THREE	
Chapter IX :	Conclusions	223 - 240
	Bibliography	241 - 252

INTRODUCTION

"I tell thee, He was a Bulgar"

"Christ a Bulgar! Why, thou onion-headed simpleton, all the world knows that He was a Greek !"

An argument in a market place. Cited in G.F. Abbot, A Tour in Macedonia, p. 155

The creation of the League of Nations was hailed by a war-weary world as a great step towards the peaceful settlement of disputes among nations. It was believed that "human welfare promoted by the spontaneous and orderly cooperation of all for the benefit of all" would serve on the international scene as a guarantee against aggression and oppression.[1] And the League was expected to be the instrument embodying this new spirit.

While the general euphoria about the possibility of maintaining eternal peace was evident at a popular level in Europe, keen observers of the contemporary scene were not carried away by it. They had already seen the symptoms of disappointment, recrimination, bitterness among nations, symptoms which when unchecked in the past had swollen the surge to wars. The post-war atmosphere was aptly described

---

1 W. E. Rappard, "Nationalism and the League" in the American Political Science Review, October, 1933; see also Sir Arthur Salter, "Economic Causes and the Causes of War" in The Reawakening of Europe and other Addresses. The Institute of Politics Publications, Massachusetts, 1925, p. 151.

by Professor Rappard in these words: [2]

"The atmosphere on the morrow of the peace negotiations was very different ... Among the Associated and Allied Powers the enthusiasm of victory had soon spent itself. The feelings of mutual confidence, comradeship and gratitude ... had given way to recrimination and disappointment ... The French, abandoned and almost betrayed, the British impatient to return to their imperial interests ... the Italians, the Belgians and the other victors, none of whom had achieved all their national aims, all had grievences which led them to forget, or in any case, to minimise the value of the fruits of their own victory. Whereas the victors were disappointed in each other and disillusioned over their common achievements, their defeated foes were naturally still more bitter".

In the circumstances, it was to be expected that these symptoms would continue adding to the pressures, which would erupt into a renewal of conflicts. This was particularly the case since the Peace Treaties of 1920 had left a number of frontier disputes unsettled.[3] Barely had the League begun to function than it was faced in 1921 with its first frontier dispute between Austria and Hungary;

---

[2] See Author's The Question for Peace since the World War, Cambridge, 1940, pp. 134-137. For a similar point of view see also, H. Nicholson, Peace-making, London, 1933.

[3] For texts of Treaties, see British and Foreign State Papers (1919), Vol. CXII, pp. 781-997, 317-530, 1-219; for comment see G.D.H. Cole, Intelligent Man's Review of Europe Today, London, 1933, p. 186.

It was followed the next year by a border conflict in the Salgo-Tarjan region between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In 1923, Poland and Czechoslovakia came before the League to settle the "Jawozina Question". The same year Greece and Italy collided in what was known as the "Corfu Incident".[4] The conflict between Turkey and Iraq, known as the "Mosul Affair", was still pending when towards the end of 1925 a new frontier dispute, known as the "Demir-Kapu Incident" took place between Bulgaria and Greece.[5]

The precise causes of any historical conflict[6] are usually obscure. Rarely has it been possible for an historian or political scientist to retrace his steps through the complex web of events and proximate causes, and to pinpoint a single incident as the prime cause of what later

---

4 For a list of frontier disputes before 1925, see J.I. Knudson, A History of the League of Nations, Atlanta, 1938, pp. 68-80.

5 The first reaction to this frontier shooting was that it was one among many similar incidents in the Balkans. The typical reaction was given by Le Petit Paris, "... du violent incident gréco-bulgare qui vient d'éclater il résulte que la péninsule des Balkans est toujours le point le plus faible du système européen." Paris, 23 October, 1925; see also The Times, London, 20 October, 1925.

6 The expression "dispute" has been used here in the political sense as relating to a controversy or argumentative contention, while the term "conflict" in the ordinary sense connotes a prolonged struggle including an encounter with arms. In this sense, the conflict between Greece and Bulgaria which originated on 19 October at Demir-Kapu became a "dispute" when Bulgaria presented an appeal to the League of Nations. For the distinction between the two expressions, see H. Aufricht, Introductory Note, "Political Questions" in Guide to League of Nations Publications, New York, 1951, Chapter IX, pp. 304-306. For details see C. Rousseau, La compétence de la S.D.N. dans le réglement des conflicts internationaux, Paris, 1927 and his later work Le conflit Itali-Ethiopien devant le droit international, Paris, 1938; also G. Scelle, L'affaire de Corfou et la S.D.N., Dijon, 1925.

flared into a war. More often than not, many causes are interlocked in a chain of causation. No matter how difficult to isolate the prime cause, it remains true as a generalisation that the prime power of all wars, large and small, often lies hidden in an incident.

The shooting at Demir-Kapu on 19 October 1925 was one of a whole series of skirmishes which occurred from time to time at various points [7] of the frontier between Bulgaria and Greece. What makes the shooting of a sentry on 19 October 1925 more significant is the fact that the initial incident could have led to a state of war. With more shooting at various frontier posts, a constant alert and the advance of the Greek army into Bulgaria, the situation changed qualitatively from a regular border incident into an armed conflict.

The principal causes of the conflict between Bulgaria and Greece are rooted in their geography, religion, ethnology, history and economics. According to one's view of historical causation, any of these could be considered as the prime cause or mover of events. We can simply begin by stating that border incidents between

---

7 As early as 1892, Bulgaria had a dispute with Greece regarding Greek Schools. Later many incidents took place in the region of Daridéré, and all along the border, in Ortakeny, Egherek, Morfova, Mihalitch, Kral-déré, Kouroudjou-déré and various other places. (A few thousand sheep were alleged to have been stolen). See LON Archives, Pro Memoria, Government of Bulgaria, in Documents communicated by the Military Attachés to the Commission of Enquiry, File No. 48131; also see the detailed one of Carnegie Endowment in 1918; two sketches in it highlight the popular beliefs. The sketches are entitled: (i) Eater of Bulgars and (ii) Has the Greek soldier taken the eyes of a Bulgar ? and Sir Robert Graves, Storm Centres of the Near East (1879-1929) in which he describes Greek excesses in Macedonia from 1906 to 1909.

neighbouring states in the Balkans were not, as already referred to, an unusual occurrence. These incidents in most cases arose from frequent frontier changes, leading to a disturbance of the complex arrangements whereby a group, or groups of persons, speaking a particula language or languages, reside and make their livelihood under a particular military and political power. Such frequent changes not only upset the established patterns but also in turn give rise to demands and actions for another settlement as the final settlement.

Both Greece and Bulgaria are part of what is called the "Balkans", a mountainous peninsula,[8] which runs southwards between the Adriatic and the Aegean Seas. Successive invasions and migrations passed through this region. For centuries, it has been the major channel of communication between the East and the West as

---

[8] The areas between the Black Sea (east), the Bosphorus the Sea of Marmara, the Dardanelles and the Aegean Sea (south) connecting the Ionian and the Adriatic Seas (west). The line of Sava and Danube rivers is commonly considered as the northern limit. Thus all of continental Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, European Turkey, Yugoslavia and South East Rumania (i.e. the successor states to the Ottoman Empire) were called "the Balkan states". For definition, see The Columbia Encyclopedia, New York, 1950, p. 142.

well as the focal point of international rivalries.[9] Thus, politics in the Balkans was always a series of experiments in readjustments of frontiers, with the result that the region was labelled "a laboratory of history".[10] This background is essential to an appreciation of the fact that the Demir-Kapu incident could have easily become the gun-shot in another round of conflicts, wars and peace-settlements, but for the timely intervention of the League of Nations and the

---

9. For a detailed discussion on the influence of geography on the political life of the Balkans, see South-Eastern Europe, a political and economic survey prepared jointly by R.I.I.A. and the London Cambridge Economic Service, London, 1939, pp. 2-6; also the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace, Year Book, (1926), p. 42. J.C. Roucek describes this region in these words: "Wave after wave of invaders overran the region imposing alien cultures on the resentful victims and added new deposits of perplexing formulation". See his The Balkan Gateway, New York, 1939, p. 1. M. Mileff, points out that the proximity of the Straits of Bosporus and Dardanelles also played an important role. See his La Bulgarie et les Détroits, 1927, p. 189

10. Tracing the history of Central Europe, G. Schachter wrote that the area had become the most dangerous centre of crisis in the world. See his Central Europe and the Western World, London, 1936, p. 7.

relative indifference of the big powers, exhausted as a result of World War I.[11]

In the twenty-seven year history of the League of Nations, the organisation was confronted with forty-four "political questions", several of which related to frontier disputes.[12] Looking back on these years, it is not easy to assert or deny with certainty that the League had in a particular dispute prevented war which would have broken out but for its intervention. What can be said, however, is that most of these disputes contained germs of war. The Greco-Bulgarian conflict of 1925 also contained major elements of a political war - a war which could have even possibly engulfed countries beyond the frontiers of the parties to the dispute. In sharp contrast to the other disputes brought before the League, the conflict between Greece and Bulgaria was perhaps the only major one which was settled with unusual speed - within a week - and before hostilities could lead to a war. It is the uniqueness of this success which singles out this incident for detailed study.

---

11 The fears that the situation was inflammable were commonly shared by most of the observers of the contemporary scene. One of these studies undertaken with the assistance of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace described them in these words: "The seeds of hatred, mistrust and suspicion which have been planted in the hearts of nations throughout the world, as a result of the unjust treaties imposed by the victors upon the vanquished when settling the peace of Europe in 1919, are today bearing only poisonous fruit, which, if not uprooted immediately, will further spread and eventually destroy civilisation. Bulgaria and the Balkan Problems, Pamphlets on Bulgaria, Sofia, 1934, No. 15, Vol. II, pp. 5-6. C.P. Howland traces Greek history under the Turks and comments on the illogical frontiers created by war as a "major national disaster" in "Greece and the Greeks", Foreign Affairs, April 1926, p. 454.

12 H. Aufricht, has divided "political questions" into disputes and "incidents" further classified into "political questions" dealt with by the League of Nations and "those of Special interest". op.cit., p. 304.

As an historian or a political scientist attempts to collect the evidence concerning a conflict in order to identify a cause, he is faced with unusual difficulties. The very evidence in most cases is coloured by what the participants in the events or their witnesses believed, thought, said or saw. In this sense, the evidence is more often than not contradictory. Therefore, the attempt has to be restricted to putting together as many details as the passage of time since the events permit and to resist the temptation of any clear conclusion as to the final cause, or in a partisan sense, to the guilty party. The incidents and the events and their culmination in conflicts and wars often represent the escalation of minor moves on the part of individuals into events which neither the early actors nor the later participants really wished for or anticipated, and much less prepared for.

All this is not altogether irrelevant; it is meant to emphasise the fact that as the incidents are pieced together in the subsequent chapters, they are not meant to point to any final causes of the conflict, or in fact to the universal applicability to different situations of the measures that succeeded in averting a major war in 1925.

Sources

The significance attached to the incident may be easily assessed from the fact that it immediately became the subject of a study by G.V. Saraîlieff which was published in book form barely a year and a half after the incident [13]. Coming so soon after the incident, it was to be expected that Saraîlieff's study, mainly based on the Official Journal and the Monthly Bulletin of the League and the reports published in the European press, would reflect the contemporary mood. But the Archives

---

13 G.V. Saraîlieff, Le conflit Gréco-Bulgare d'Octobre 1925 et son Règlement par la Société des Nations, Amsterdam, May 1927.

of the League, which contained reports on the closed meetings of the League and Official Records of the British Foreign Office, were not then open for research. The author thus could not have access to sources which disclosed the inner working of the mechanism of decision-making in the League and the Foreign Offices of the Powers involved. A student of political history, now reopening one of the important questions that came before the League of Nations and one in which the League's intervention attained the hall-mark of success, has a distinct advantage - the benefit of hindsight and the League of Nations Archives.

As noted in the Bibliography, the most significant sources in terms of "sequence of decision-making are to be found in the 6 "Confidential files" originating in the League Secretariat relating to the Greek-Bulgarian conflict. The documents from the Public Record Office in London listed under Bulgaria (Foreign Relations) Greece, 1925, provide yet another dimension in the narration of "sequence of events". The information concerning diplomatic moves regarding the proposed action by the League of Nations of "Naval demonstration by the Powers if Greece does not comply with the decision of the Council" is contained in these documents.

Not many books have been published on the subject, despite the fact that this is a unique experiment in the peaceful settlement of disputes. Part of the reason may lie in the fact that the primary sources were inaccessible until recently.

When the first draft of this monograph was about ready, this author came across an article on the subject by Mr. James Barros which appeared in August 1964 in the Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society (vol. 108, No. 4). His main

findings were later elaborated by him in a book published in 1970 under the title: The League of Nations and the Great Powers: the Greek-Bulgarian Incident 1925. (Clarendon Press, Oxford). The chief interest of his work lies in the fact that he has utilised the Greek Archives, the Italian Archives, the Archives of the German Foreign Ministry and the National Archives of the United States, Washington, D.C. Thus, Mr. Barros's study emphasises the role of the Great Powers outside the League of Nations.

On the other hand, it may be noted that the governments of Greece and Bulgaria submitted official documentation relevant to the subject, to the League of Nations, during the consideration of the dispute. This study, therefore, relies heavily on the Archives of the League of Nations supported by the Public Record Office in London and other documentary sources. As a result, this study emphasises the mechanism of the settlement of the dispute inside the League of Nations.

Mr. Barros, for instance focuses his attention as his title clearly indicates, on the Great Powers (the conjunction "and" in his title is an important nuance). The unfolding of the border incident, described in the first two chapters of his book is followed in the next three chapters by a detailed account of the attitude of the Great Powers as revealed in the Archives of their Foreign Offices and in the Forum of the League.

On the other hand, this author has attempted to examine in some detail the historical background of the tensions between the two countries and the antecedents of the involvement of the League before the incident. Despite different approaches and exploration of different avenues the two studies are complementary.

Before 1925, whenever border incidents occurred between Greece and Bulgaria, the contemporary observers and diplomats invariably considered the phenomenon as a normal state of affairs. When the shooting incident took place at Demir-Kapu, their immediate comment was that it was "one among the many". In this study we have attempted to answer the question: "why this one"?. It must be immediately added that the Demir-Kapu shooting was not the last of the frontier incidents between Greece and Bulgaria.

Plan of Study

For analysis of contemporary disputes, the relevant point may be not only to gain insight into the frailties of International Organisation - the League in the inter-war period and the United Nations since 1945 - but also to consider the possibilities of peaceful settlement under their auspices. The success achieved by the League of Nations though limited in point of time furnishes the basis for an approach to prevent the similar incidents from developing into open conflicts. This requires an adequate understanding of the set of circumstances which form the hard core of the causes of the Conflict described in Part I (The Historical Framework) and the main pressures that worked towards containing it in Part II (The Dispute before the League of Nations).

The Historical Framework begins with the description of the incident in Chapter I "The Incident at Demir-Kapu" the three days of confusion that led to esclation and the attempt made by both sides to find solutions. Chapter II of the study traces the origins of the Conflict starting from Macedonia which forms its core and leading to the Peace "Settlements" which harden the issue.

Chapter III analyses alternative approaches to settlement at three different levels: Level III, the base of the pyramid consists of diplomatic probings in Athens and Sofia, the purpose of which was to "sound out" the reactions of the Great Powers particularly Britain. Level II consists of an attempt to establish direct contact between Bulgaria and Greece through their respective legations, while at Level I, a weak attempt is made by the "local staff" at the frontier to arrange a pourparler.

Part II entitled "Dispute before the League of Nations" consists of four chapters which in turn analyse the procedures and mechanism involved in handling the dispute between Greece and Bulgaria.

Chapter IV deals with the Involvement of the League in multiple conflicts between Greece and Bulgaria from the problems of minorities the constant source of friction to the settlement of the Refugees. The refugee Commission and the various questions of repatriation of property and settlement are briefly described until 1924/25. The narrative is taken to the point of the Demir-Kapu incident when Bulgaria appeals to the League "to take necessary steps without delay" to withdraw Greek troops from its territory.

Chapter V examines the details of Convening the "Extraordinary Session" of the Council. Debate between the parties, personal diplomacy of the President and the Secretary-General of the League in implementing the resolution concerning withdrawal of troops and the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry is also included.

Chapter VI is devoted to the procedure of the appointment of the Commission of Enquiry and the process of investigation of facts by its members before the preparation of the Report.

Chapter VII discusses the report itself and its submission to the League Council. The report surveys in detail different measures proposed to limit and prevent future incidents between the two countries. Differing views of the two parties are then presented leading to the decision of the Council.

Chapter VIII is mainly concerned with the implementation of the decision as regards indeminities and reorganisation of the frontier. This Chapter also includes a summary of the establishment of the administrative machinery in the form of "The Committee of Three", the "Neutral Officers" and a Conciliation Committee.

Various elements to "regulate the dispute" were still at work, when another minor incident similar to Demir-Kapu is brought to the attention of the League in 1927. This is, in a sense a point of departure to consider the significance of Demir-Kapu leading to the conclusions where reasons for the success of the League in preventing a war between the two States is considered. Briefly, Part III discusses in the form of conclusions the political background in Europe in 1925 which was conducive to a settlement, as the Great Powers were then not interested in a "Greek adventure". In this background the role played by three personalities of the League, President Briand, British delegate-rapporteur, Chamberlain and Secretary-General, Eric Drummond is analysed.

Part I The Historical Framework

Chapter I The Incident at Demir-Kapu

1. The Facts

More than forty years have elapsed since a stray shot killed a Greek sentry on the Greco-Bulgarian Frontier. The place was Demir-Kapu; the date was 19 October 1925. Demir-Kapu was no place for ordinary inhabitants. It was nearly inaccessible to most of the people living on either side of the frontier line between Greece and Bulgaria. The surrounding country was frequented only by shepherds and wood-cutters. The nearest village in either direction was nearly three hours away on foot. The only permanent residents of this area were the soldiers at the command posts of Greece and Bulgaria.

The frontier which creates tension among nations is the one that is likely to have a large number of frontier posts, not necessarily in proportion to its length. [1] It was no accident that the largest number of posts existed on the frontiers of Bulgaria and Greece. Compared to Serbia's 157,

---

1. The land and sea frontiers of Bulgaria were about 2158 kilometers. The longest frontier with Yugoslavia extended over about 537 kilometers, followed by those with Greece (486) and Turkey (253). For further geographical details, see Encyclopédie Balkanique Permanente, Paris, p. 24 n.

Turkey's 54, Rumania's 97, Bulgaria had 342 frontier posts facing the Greek side. [2]

The event, in different circumstances, would have probably caused no more than a few protests, followed by demands for apology and perhaps compensation; and formulas would have been soon found to settle the incident to near-satisfaction for all the sides concerned. But this shot was destined to become the centre of attention of the two neighbouring governments and the League of Nations, the newly-formed guardian of permanent peace in the world. With all the hindsight, it is not yet possible to establish with any certainty either the precise facts, or the sequence of events or the manner of their occurrence. [3] Only the day of the shooting and the death of the Greek sentry are beyond dispute. But as to who really fired

---

2. In this connection see Report, Commission of Enquiry, Official Journal, No. 2, February 1926, p. 199.

3. In this particular respect, the Demir-Kapu incident is not really unusual. E.H. Carr has pointed out that the facts of history have to be processed by the historians before being used. "No document", he adds, "can tell us more than what the author of the document thought had happened, what he thought ought to happen or would happen, or perhaps only what he wanted others to think he thought, or even only what he himself thought he thought". What is History. London, 1961, p. 10; and A. M. Schlesinger, jr. in The Bitter Heritage adds that "... the single analogy is never enough to penetrate a process so cunningly compounded not only of necessity, but of contingency, fatuity, ignorance, stupidity and chance ...", New York, 1967, p. 99.

the first shot and in whose territory, these are questions on which one can only speculate.[4] The exact time of the shooting was also disputed, since no one recorded the time of the first shots.[5] Perhaps we might well agree with a contemporary commentator who simply stated: "What actually happened on 19 October ? nobody knows or would ever know. A Greek soldier is killed, that's it." [6]

---

4 According to one version, "a Greek sentry crossed the border into Bulgaria and fired at a Bulgarian sentry, who returned fire and killed the Greek". J.I. Knudson, A History of the League of Nations, London, p. 81; while D.P. Myers concludes that though shots were fired by both sides, the death of the Greek occurred in Bulgarian territory. Handbook of the League of Nations Since 1920. World Peace Foundation Publications, 1930, p. 278. See also H. Rowan-Robinson, Sanctions Begone. London, 1936, p.42 in which the author places the incident a year earlier in 1924, which may be a typographical error.

5 The shot was fired at about 1.30 p.m. according to the Greeks, and at about 2.45 p.m. according to the Bulgarians. Council Minutes, Thirty-seventh session, Official Journal, February 1926, Annex 815, p. 198.

6 Revue des deux mondes, vol. 31, Paris, 1926, p. 15.

On the basis of the available information and evidence, we may attempt to reconstruct the sequence of events. On the afternoon of 19 October, a Greek sentry, Zitafiris, died of a bullet wound a few paces from the frontier line dividing Greece and Bulgaria. Throughout that afternoon, intermittent shots from both sides continued to be exchanged.

The nearest headquarters of the fourth covering battalion of the Greek frontier guards, consisting of 20 men, were at Pororia in Kilkis Province, twenty kilometers away from Demir-Kapu. Captain Vassiliadis, on learning the news of the shooting, departed on horseback 'with a hastily improvised flag'.[7] Before departure, he is reported to have told his men the purpose of his journey was to ascertain facts on the spot.[8]

---

[7] Council Minutes, Thirty-seventh session, Official Journal, February 1926, p. 109. The New York Times described the incident in this manner: "Following the attack in which a Greek official was killed, severe fighting raged for 24 hours. It finally culminated in the Bulgarians hoisting a white flag and the tendering of expressions of regret by the Bulgarian Commander who explained that firing on the Greek post was due to a misunderstanding", adding an optimistic note by quoting a dispatch from Athens that "efforts will be made to obtain foreign diplomatic mediation on the frontier incident", 22 October 1925.

[8] LON Archives, Documents submitted by the Greek Government to the Military Attachés, Enclosure No. 8, File No. 48131 (Translated from the original Greek into French by the Secretariat of the League of Nations). These documents form a part of the Archives of the Commission of Enquiry.

On arrival, he had advanced but a few paces when he was fatally hit by a bullet. By the time the darkness fell on the frontier hills of Mount Belassitza, the firing had become more general.

The subsequent versions of the original incident by both sides differed in almost all detail.

According to the Bulgarians, the head of post No. 1 had been ill for three days and was replaced by a sentry who moved towards the cabin where a colleague was playing music. The Greek sentry also crossed the border to listen to the music. The Greek soldiers started shotting and throwing hand-grenades. The Bulgarians occupied positions on both sides, while the Greeks rapidly arranged their position and fired. More Bulgarians arrived by 6.30 p.m.

The British, Italian and French military Attachés who were serving the Interallied Commission at the time in Belgrade were appointed by the Council of the League[9]

---

[9] They were appointed by a Resolution dated 29 October 1925. Third Meeting, Thirty-sixth (Extraordinary) session. Official Journal, 25 November 1925, pp. 1712 - 1713.

to collect first hand evidence of the incident. Their evidence was to serve as the basis on which a special Commission of Enquiry [10] was later to investigate the boarder shooting. The appointment and the composition of these two bodies which were to play an important role towards the solution of the dispute, are discussed subsequently in Chapter VII . Here, we may note that both governments recorded the following versions of the incident.

The Bulgarian Government contended that the soldiers neither saw the white flag nor heard the bugle which is customarily used in these parts in such a situation, maintaining that "... on the 19th a Bulgarian soldier was going towards his post when he heard some music and took a few steps. A Greek soldier ... asked him ... permission to come to Bulgarian territory". The Bulgarian soldier turned to reply when he was fired at. The shot missed. Surprised by the attack, he fired back, killing the Greek Captain Vassiliadis. [11]

---

10 LON, Archives, The Commission of Enquiry, Greco-Bulgare Incident. Documents communicated by the British, French and Italian Military Attachés, Belgrade, original in File No. 48131, 28 November 1925.

11 LON, Documents submitted by the Bulgarian Government to the Military Attachés, Enclosure No. 7, File No. 48131.

The description of the Greeks starts with the incident at 1.30 p.m. when post No. 62 was occupied by 8 men, some of whom were sleeping and some of whom were sitting. When they heard shots and saw the Greek soldier killed, a corporal was watching from the window. He saw 80 soldiers with 'Comitadjis' [12] occupying the Bulgarian post. At 2.40 p.m., fearing that they were attacked, they also organised their positions. By 4.0 p.m. Captain Vassiliadis arrived and was killed.

The Greek version insisted that "... in the neighbourhood of Demir-Hissar, the Bulgarian posts began to fire without provocation. Naturally the soldiers of the post, on seeing their comrade fall dead, replied ... (Later) the Captain of the Company (Vassiliadis) ordered his soldiers to cease fire, hoisted the white flag, went towards the Bulgarian post and was shot". [13]

---

12. The definition and meaning of the term "Comitadjis" is discussed in Chapter II. According to the Regulations (Nos. 10 and 11 of the Frontier Guards) the population of the frontier zone could be summoned to help the Bulgarian army "in case of necessity".

13. LON, Documents submitted by the Greek Government to the Military Attachés, Enclosure No. 8, File No. 48131.

It is evident that both sides to the dispute gave differing interpretations of these events. In the documents submitted by both the Greek and Bulgarian governments to the Military Attachés, the incident is reconstructed on contradictory facts. The Commission of Enquiry in sifting evidence, later left out certain details. The Military Attachés who had the benefit of arriving at a conclusion based on fresh memory definitely concluded, "il est impossible d'établir avec certitude qui a tiré le premier".

2. Escalation: The next three days (19 to 21 October 1925)

After the corpse of the Greek sentry was found on 19 October, the frontier detachments on both sides made use of their arms and continued firing for the next three days. Captain Vassiliadis's subsequent death added the necessary element for escalation. The minor incident of 19 October was on the verge of becoming a major event. Both sides to the dispute saw in the shooting the confirmation of their worst fears. There was a general preparedness on both sides. Messages from the rear to the front became more frequent. Appeals for more and stronger reinforcements began to circulate among the units, the Company Headquarters, and the Divisons. As the tension on the frontier posts heightened, the danger of a major military confrontation began to take shape during these three days of confusion.

A Greek captain, Siotakis, arrived on the scene of the shooting with one hundred men "to try to cease fighting so that it does not continue". [14] He informed his superiors about the situation.

---

14 For original texts, see LON Archives, Commission of Enquiry, (various stages of preparation), 3 December 1925, File No. 47802. All original 'telephonogrammes' in Greek were later translated into French by the League of Nations Secretariat and confirmed by Captain Pepeoannos, 6th Greek Division, during the visit of the Commission of Enquiry in November 1925.

He said that according to a report from Pororia, Greek post No. 69 was attacked by substantial Bulgarian forces.[15]

There was another crucial message which was to add to the confusion there, and to much misunderstanding later. It stated that the Bulgarian battalion was equipped with some machine guns. The message on arrival was misconstrued to imply that a well-equipped Bulgarian battalion was already in action. The officer in charge of despatching the message, as was to be found later on, committed the fault of "not verifying his information and above all, of not resisting the temptation of improving it".[16]

From the secret report[17] of the general staff and the "journaux de marche" of the units, it was later confirmed that the Greek captain definitely exaggerated the strength of the other side. During its transmission, the message was dramatised by the head of the battalion, producing the effect of fear and suspicion. A real battle came to be regarded as imminent. But his superiors still did not consider the military situation grave enough, for in their instructions, Siotakis was told "to stop the combat". The reply to these instructions stated that "the firing has ceased"; but it added

---

15 Ibid.

16 LON, Commission of Enquiry Report, Annex 815, p. 198 and Document (C. 727.1925. VII).

17 See the depositions of the Commander of the Sixth Division at Sidirokastron on 4 November 1925, ibid.

that "the Bulgars have raised a white flag to trap our men".

During the night of 20/21 October, the Greek army pooled their men from Kilkis, Demir-Hissar and other neighbouring centres and assembled them around Demir-Kapu. [18]

From the reading of Bulgarian messages, it appears that their frontier guards did not attach much importance to the initial incident. The first message from Demir-Kapu simply stated that the death of the Greek sentry occurred "in our territory". The cause of the shooting, it added, was not known. Later, when the shooting did not cease, the Bulgarian captain Stoinoff who was at Sveti-Vratch, a few kilometres away from Demir-Kapu, informed his superior officers at Dupnitza that the white flag raised by their men had been answered by more shooting. This was construed to be a clear indication of continuing hostilities. It was not until 21 October that the request for a battalion and a battery of reinforcement reached Sofia. It was then that Bulgarian reinforcements began to arrive at Demir-Kapu, utilising all the available motor lorries in the region. Including the civilians,

---

18 The position of the Greek army units on 19 October 1925, was as follows: 19th and 20th Infantry Regiments of the Sixth Division at Serrès, 21st Infantry Regiments at Demir-Hissar; 6th Regiment of mountain artillary at Serrès; 18th Battalion of frontier divided at the posts; part of the Battalion at Demir-Hissar, 1st Co. at Tsingueli; 2nd Co. at Vétrina; 3rd Co. at Vrontou. ibid.

the total strength of the Bulgarians was about 150. [19]

The news of the firing reached Sofia on 19 October, the very day of the incident. Owing to certain official ceremonies, all work had stopped in the Ministries on that day. The despatch, though forwarded to Sofia during the night, was thus not communicated to the Chief of the General Staff during the night. It was forwarded to him the next morning at 9, when the news of forward movements of the Greek troops was also being received. The first reaction from Sofia was that the incident should be terminated. Therefore, no reinforcements to the Sector Commanders were sent during the two days following the incident.

It was only after 21 of October that the Ministry of War in Sofia ordered certain reinforcements to be sent to Petritch by motor lorry or by rail from the south-west of Bulgaria. These consisted of small units, sections, batteries, companies detached from their regiments; and they were formed into fighting units on arrival. The

---

19 The position of the Bulgarian units was as follows: 147 men at the sub-section of Demir-Kapu post under the command of Popanghéloff, 156 at the sector at Petritch under Lt. Col. Goléminoff, 40 men at Maréconstinave under Captain Nicoloff, 89 men near Petrovo under Sgt.-major Iliaphiliphov. The frontier guards consisted of 150 officers, 200 sub-officers and 2650 volunteers. They were divided into eight sectors; each sector into 3 quartiers; each quartier was numbered from 1 to 24 at the head of which was a commander. Each sub-quartier was composed of 3 to 6 posts with 6 - 9 men per post. At the head of the sector, quartier and sub-quartier were 8 to 10 men per post. LON Archives, Correspondence Col. Lindh and Col. Siefvert, Règlement concernant la service de Garde frontière greco-bulgare, Salonika, 6 October 1926, File No. 54914.

Bulgarian General Staff was clearly hesitating to displace its main units in case a larger movement of troops became necessary. One company of infantry and one machine-gun from Dupnitza were brought by rail; and 432 civilians, not all armed, acting as supply troops were on their way.

On learning of the dangerous situation on their frontier, the Secretary-General to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Constantine Minkoff, telephoned the Greek Chargé d'affaires in Sofia, Raoul Rosetti-Bibica. He said that those in charge of operations should be instructed to cease hostilities and establish responsibilities. [20] The Chief of Staff in Sofia, General Marinoff, cabled his local Commander at Sveti-Vratch: "There has been a shooting at Demir-Kapu ... please cease shooting on our side ... fix at what time at which post we await the news from the Greeks at the frontier". [21]

The Ministry of War at Athens had received the news of the firing at Demir-Kapu and its aftermath much earlier than was the case in Sofia. The main reason was the

---

20 LON Archives, Recapitulation of the Incident by the Bulgarians. (Unpublished documents), File No. 49381.

21 Documents submitted by the Bulgarian Government to the Military Attachés, op.cit.

superior communication equipment of the Greek army. The Ministry of War had in its possession a transmitter which speeded up the receiving of messages from the rear. The Greek General Staff had established a good communication system in the district where the Salonika-Serres-Dedeagatch (Alexandroupolis) Railway connected Macedonia with Thrace. They were clearly aware of the importance of rapid news transmission in the event of any serious encounter with Bulgaria. It would enable them to take rapid follow-up action. For one thing, the communications could be cut off, as the railway ran parallel to the Bulgarian frontier at a distance of not more than 10 kilometres. Moreover, measures could be taken concerning the Bulgarian population in Macedonia and Thrace, which contained pro-Bulgar elements.

On 20 October, Athens was alerted. It had no reason to disbelieve the message from the frontier guard that the Bulgarians were preparing to attack in full force. [22] In rapid sequence, all the preparations for an adequate military response followed.

On the night of 21 October the Greek troops had consolidated in three columns and prepared to advance to Petritch. General Pangalos issued the following order: "The 3rd Army Corps will prepare to advance with all its forces towards Livurova in the Struma Valley in order to outflank Mount Belles by way of Petritch. The 4th Army

---

22 The Commission of Enquiry reported on this point that the Greek Government considered the news as correct. See its Report, op.cit., p.5.

Corps will prepare for an invasion with all its forces in the direction of Nevrokop with the object of diverting and containing some of the Bulgarian forces. Both Corps will await further orders before advancing ... ".[23] Within 12 hours, and perhaps in haste, immediate instructions were issued to occupy the heights of Kula and Petritch, outflanking the Bulgarian forces allegedly attacking the Greek posts. [This time the new order read: Occupy the heights north of Kula and south of Petritch and outflank the Bulgarian forces which attacked Demir-Kapu].

The advance towards Petritch began at 6 a.m. on 22nd October. The reason for moving towards the town was given in a telegram from Athens, which stated that the Commanding Officer in Macedonia was "obliged to avoid sacrifice involved by frontal attack in mountainous

---

23 It was the order of the Commander of the Sixth Division which instructed the local command to begin the offensive on the morning of 22 October as far as the fixed objectives. The units consisted of three companies, one company machine-gun and 1-1/2 Batteries including an alpine Battery. The artillery was put at the disposal of the centre column of the infantry under the command of the Division Inspector. For the text of the Order, see Official Journal, February 1926, p. 201.

country and for other strategical reasons". [24]

At this juncture, the Greek units were stationed along a ridge; a special tactical operation against Petritch could be carried out by them without meeting any real resistance from Bulgaria. As a matter of fact, the inhabitants of this town were already evacuated in anticipation of this emergency. The Greek army made an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the railway line by bombarding the town. Fighting spread to several posts along the frontier. There were a handful of casualties on both sides; the number of munitions spent did not amount to more than a few hundred. [25]

---

[24] LON, Telegram from Athens communicated to the League by Dendramis, Greek chargé d'affaires at Berne. Circulated by Sir Eric Drummond to the members of the Council on 24 October 1925. Document (C. 634, M.213). See also The New York Times, 23 October 1925, to the effect that "... Hellenic Government insists on indemnity being paid. Inquiry is refused". For the order of the Commander of the Sixth Division that offensive be carried out, see Report, Commission of Enquiry, op.cit., p. 199.

[25] On this point later, the foreign correspondents of Le Matin (Baron de Gerando); Daily Mail (Pitt); Agence Télégraphique Hongroise (Ta Chauer); Temps (Markham), gave eye-witness accounts to the Commission of Enquiry, LON Archives, Procès verbaux et Résumé prepared by the Commission. File No. 48132. But at the time there were divergent views from various places. The Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency talked to the Greek troops trying to push forward, while the correspondent from Vienna reported that the "Greek forces are moving rapidly and that the main body of them has already penetrated ten miles into Bulgarian territory". The reporter from London did not mention Greek troops but only asked "what action will the League take?". The New York Times, New York, 23 October 1925.

Several villages were already under Greek occupation.[26] Reuter's Athens correspondent reported that Greeks would withdraw only if the Bulgarians would evacuate their post No. 69 where the original incident occurred.[27]

The Greek army invaded from Post No. 4, a few kilometres north of Kunguro, and advanced through the outskirts of Petritch and Kartachna and crossed the railway line onwards to Marikostinovo, de Spanĉa, Pipernica and Lehovo where it stopped near the Bulgarian frontier post No. 87. In their advance they moved at several points inside the Bulgarian territory.

The Greek troops entered Bulgarian territory through the Struma Valley after the artillery fired several shells on Petritch and the Railway Station of Manopol on the Radomir-Petritch Line. The Bulgarian resistance

---

26 The secret report of the General Staff of the Greek Sixth Division as well as the extracts from the "journaux de marché" of the units who participated, already mentioned, revealed how the operations were in fact carried out. See particularly the statement of Captain Sidirokastrou, Documents communicated by the Bulgarian Government, op. cit.

27 The New York Times, 25 October 1925.

stopped the Greeks south of Petritch [28]. At the time, the Bulgarians had in their possession 6 companies of infantry and three machine guns. They had acted in readiness to a warning given to their Commander at Petritch that "il est très probable que les Grècs vont entreprendre quelques actions" [29].

The military movements, [30] the bombardment of Petritch and the advance of the Greek troops inside the Bulgarian territory was later described by an independent observer thus: "Neither side reports that the enemy at Demir-Kapu received any reinforcement on the 21st. On 22nd October, at 6 a.m., when the situation had been stabilised at that point and the local conflagration was dying down of its

---

28 It was later alleged by the Bulgarians that several bombs were dropped on a bridge near Lovanovo, 15 kilometres from Petritch. LON Archives, Letter from Minkoff transmitted through Bulgarian Legation at Berne, 24 October 1925, File No. 47301.

29 Documents Communicated by the Bulgarian Government, op.cit.

30 The Associated Press reported that "... road running to Sveti-Vratch declared to be congested with refugees whom the Bulgarians cannot shelter or feed ... 25 are killed, 15,000 are homeless and 240 square miles of Bulgarian territory is occupied by the Greeks". Petritch was a mass of ruins and the town was totally deserted except for the Mayor. The correspondent was asked by the peasants: "Has it come again, the War ?". The New York Times, New York, 24 October 1925.

own accord, Greek troops entered Bulgarian territory through the Struma Valley. Everything tends to show that the officer commanding these troops, not being in direct contact with those at Demir-Kapu who were not under his orders, was unaware of the exact situation at the moment. [31]

While the Greek army unit was well-equipped with definite objectives, were on their way to accomplishing the allotted tasks, the instructions from Sofia to the colonel in charge of operations were to contain the fighting. From Sofia came the following instruction: "Make only slight resistance, protect the fugitive and panic-stricken population, prevent the spread of panic in the Struma Valley and do not expose the troops to unnecessary losses".

At this point, it is of some relevance to look into the overall military strength of both the sides to the dispute. The Bulgarian army could not, under the clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly (1920) exceed 20,000 men,

---

31 Report, Commission of Enquiry, op.cit., p. 4.

who were enlisted under a voluntary system. [32] There was only one factory in Bulgaria under state control which manufactured armaments. The total number of machine-guns at its disposal were 19. Rifles were rationed. [33]

In Greece, military service was compulsory and universal between the ages of 20 and 51. The strength of its army amounted to nearly 100,000 men. The position of the Army as recorded in Stateman's Annual Survey in 1924 was as follows: there were 6,450 officers, and about 80,000 men in arms. The infantry was equipped with

---

32 Under the provisions (Articles 64-93), of the Treaty of Neuilly, the army, police and the frontier guards were all supposed to be recruited on voluntary service and the age qualification was between 18-28, with the obligation to serve for six years. LON Archives, Legal Disposition to Regulate the Organisation of Frontier Guard Service, File No. 48129. When Bulgaria was accused by the Conference of Ambassadors in their communication of 6 December 1922, of retaining the principle of compulsory military service under Article 71 of the Bulgarian Constitution, Col. Noykoff, the Bulgarian representative, pleaded in a Statement to the League on 21 April 1923, that modification of the Constitution was a complicated matter which required fresh elections and would cost the state more than a million gold francs. For criticism of voluntary enlistment, see The Manchester Guardian, London, 6 November 1919.

33 The possession of a rifle by the head of the sector was contrary to the Treaty of Neuilly. See Report, Commission of Enquiry, op.cit., p. 199. For details of equipment produced, see n. 59, p. 55.

Mannlicher and Lebel rifles, and the artillery with French 75 field guns and light and medium Howitzers. The navy possessed 11 destroyers, 12 modern torpedo boats, and 2 submarines. The services of a British admiral were also loaned to Greece to reorganise its fleet. Thus, Greece clearly had a military and technical superiority - quite apart from the well-equipped naval force.

In Athens, the Demir-Kapu incident had become a major political event. Up to 20/21 October, the military measures taken by Greek troops were regarded by Greece as "nothing more than perfectly legitimate precautions".[34] During the next forty-eight hours, these "legitimate precautions" were to be transformed into specific combative action.

---

[34] Report, Commission of Enquiry, op.cit., p.5

CHAPTER II : Origins of the Conflict

1. Macedonia, the core of the conflict

The scene of the frontier shooting at Demir-Kapu on 19 October 1925, was in the heart of Macedonia, where the borders of three countries, Yugoslavia, Greece and Bulgaria, converged. Demir-Kapu is situated only a few kilometers from the frontier which divides Yugoslavia from Bulgaria.

In a sense at Demir-Kapu the geographical landscape merges into the politico-economic details and a simple shooting incident may unwittingly unfold the historical past. The angle of vision, therefore, has to be widened to project into the past in order to explain the present.

With the rise and fall of each empire, the political fortunes of Macedonians also changed.[1] Throughout history, the Macedonians have continued to struggle in one form or another for their independence as an independent people.[2]

---

[1] Macedonia is a region which was always geographically ill-described and politically ill-defined, according to the Encyclopædia Britannica, Vol. XIV, 1955, p. 564.

[2] There is perhaps no parallel in history except for Kurdistan, of a movement of such long duration for national assertion. For comparison see LON Archives, Various Petitions in favour of the Independence of Kurdistan, File No. 43566. In 1944, Macedonia became an autonomous republic of Yugoslavia. The question of Macedonia continues to be controversial between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to this day. For comments on Controversy, see M. Djilas, Conversation with Stalin, London 1962, p. 37.

The struggle was sometimes direct and sometimes indirect. And quite often the incidents and conflicts became the proximate causes of other much bigger wars - for instance the first and second Balkan wars and in fact World War I. Through all the vicissitudes of history and changing political fortunes, the inhabitants of this region have continued to consider themselves as Macedonians. [3]

The reason for the desire of various empires to dominate Macedonia is not far to seek. It lies in the fact that the main routes of the Balkan peninsula pass through Macedonia. No Empire could consider itself secure from attacks from the East or the West without holding Macedonia. Macedonia forms the centre of communications between Constantinople, Albania, Bosnia, Hercégovina and Serbia. The wars and conflicts which were caused by this desire for control of communications had an important effect on the structure of the populations in Macedonia; it had become multi-ethnic. No single ethnic or religious group could command a real majority at any given moment except perhaps for a brief period after the second Balkan war in 1913. In order to understand the many political upheavals which have rocked Macedonia, it is well to keep in mind the geographical background, the changing political control and the mixing

---

[3] See W.S. Monroe, Bulgaria and Her People, Boston, 1914, p. 373.

of various ethnic groups.[4]

The successive changes in political control caused great upheavals to the already unsettled economic activity.[5] The coastal strip around the Aegean Sea has two important ports; Kavalla and Dedeagatch (Alexandroupolis) both of which lie in Western Thrace. It is from this territory that the main trade of Bulgaria through the Mediterranean was conducted until 1911. Because of the economic importance of this coastal strip, some authors described Bulgaria as an "Aegean country" and others Greece as the owner of the "Aegean Bowl".[6] The chief city

---

[4] For an explanation of Bulgarian political interests, historical and ethnological analysis, see G.P. Genov, Bulgaria and the Treaty of Neuilly Sofia, 1935 and I. Ianoulaff; La Traité de Neuilly et la Bulgarie Economique, Association Bulgare pour la paix et la Société des Nations, Sofia, 1929. For Greek point of view, see A.F. Frangulis, La Grèce et la crise Mondiale, Sofia, 1935. Also E. Driault and L'héritier, M. Histoire diplomatique de la Grèce de 1821 à nos jours. Paris. 1925/6.

[5] For different versions, see LON Archives, Appeals and complaints addressed to the Commission, in File No. 48133. There were several journals published abroad which were advocating the cause of Macedonia. Among them, the most vocal was the "Bulletin pour l'indépendance de la Macédoine" published in Geneva. See particularly No. 2, 1922, the Proceedings of the "Right of People", congress held in Geneva in May 1921 and Mémoire, Association Macédonienne Musulmane presented to the Lausanne Conference by Mousli Haddine Adib. Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, 1922-1923, London, 1923.

[6] In this connection see particularly: I. Ivanoff, Les Bulgares et leurs manifestations nationales, Berne, 1919. The author, a member of the Academy of Science in Bulgaria and a professorat the University has attempted to collect all the relevant historical and diplomatic documents on the subject. For another point of view on the Aegean, see Howland, op.cit., p. 454.

of Macedonia, Salonika, owes its importance to wider causes. In the relations between Bulgaria and Greece, it was to play a very significant rôle. A few days before the incident at Demir-Kapu, the "Free Zone" at Salonika was inaugurated for international commerce.[7]

During and after the Balkan Wars, Macedonian revolutionary movements got added impetus. The Macedonians in Bulgaria, the Bulgarians in Macedonia, the exiles in Serbia, the immigrants from Albania were all members of similar organisations. To create frontier incidents was, as the correspondent of The Times put it, "their tactical weapon to win autonomy". It was not surprising therefore that the governments and party politics in the Balkans were significantly influenced by the policies and the activities of such organisations. Among these, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary organisation (IMRO) was the most active and perhaps the most influential.[8] Its membership was spread over all classes of society, including physicians, lawyers, teachers, students, and others. It was this organisation which adopted the well known slogan "Macedonia for Macedonians". Its main objective was to organise revolutionary bands and despatch them to Macedonia. Serbia and

---

[7] See The Times, London, 19 October 1925.

[8] See G. Desbons, La Bulgarie après le traité Neuilly, Paris, 1930, pp. 159 and 179. Also the interview of L.L. Kisselintcheff, The Counselor of the Central Committee of the Union of Macedonian Political Organisations in an interview by The New York Times, 25 October 1925.

Greece also organised similar bands, [9] which often fought together with members of IMRO in Macedonia.

In the highly volatile situation in the Balkans, the IMRO exercised a powerful influence. As early as 1902, the Bulgarian bands were reported to have raided into Macedonia, creating serious disturbances of law and order. Anti-Greek riots continued at the port of Varna that year, when the leaders of the Macedonian Committee[10] were arrested. The Bulgarian government refused the Greek demand for compensation for losses suffered by the Greeks during the anti-Greek riots, saying that Bulgaria was not responsible for them.

The members of the IMRO were widely believed to be the motive force behind most of the major political troubles in the Balkans. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Demir-Kapu incident was headlined by The Times as the "Macedonian Dispute". It reminded its readers of "the past record of the Macedonian extremists who might hope to profit by the early lapse of the Greek treaty of alliance with Yugoslavia ...". [11]

---

9 See N. Moschopoulos, La question de la Thrace, Athens, 1922 and R.A. Reiss, La Question des Comitadjis en Serbie du Sud, Belgrade, 1924.

10 The IMRO continued until 1934, when President Gheorgiev declared the organisation illegal. For an excellent account of the activities of IMRO, see A. Sonnichsen, Confessions of a Macedonian, New York, 1909.

11 London, 26 October 1925.

For over half a century, the problem of Macedonia, its political loyalties, its territorial divison and the complexity of the religious beliefs [12] of its inhabitants, came to be known as the "Macedonian question". [13]

---

12 By far the best documented book on Macedonia is J. Ancel, La Macedoine; son évolution contemporaine, Paris, 1930, p. 216. For a survey of IMRO, see J. Swire, Bulgarian Conspiracy, Manchester, 1940. For a description of the two factions of IMRO, one advocating close co-operation with the Bulgarian War Office for annexation of Macedonia, and the other for genuine independence, see E. Barker, Macedonia, its place in Balkan politics, R.I.I.A., London, 1950, pp. 16-17.

13 See Articles 1 and 10 of the "Firman Impérial" quoted in I. Slivensky, La Bulgare depuis le Traité de Berlin et la paix dans les Balkans, 1927, pp. 19-20. For political discussion see N. Brailsford, Macedonia, its race and their future, London, 1906, and appendix No. 15 in Ivanoff, Les Bulgares ... op.cit.

2. The Peace Settlements

(a) The Treaty of Neuilly (1920)

With the end of the First World War, the diplomats began the difficult task of post-war peace settlements. The search for peace equalled in intensity the fear of war. The peace settlements were embodied in the four major peace treaties - named respectively after Versailles, Saint-Germain, Trianon and Neuilly. The state frontiers were re-drawn, and the number of political units in Europe increased from 21 to 28. As G.D.H. Cole later observed: "No event in all European history has brought about such enormous changes in the political map of Europe, as regards both in boundaries and in method of government, as the war of 1914-18 and the five peace treaties which followed it".[14]

While the war-weary people were in a mood of euphoria about lasting peace, keen observers of the scene had already begun to express doubts about the public pronouncements of politicians on peace-making. J.M. Keynes had leapt to international fame by writing his Economic Consequences of Peace, at a time when others with equal or greater inside knowledge but less understanding and still others with equal or greater understanding but less inside knowledge, and certainly with much less powerful a pen - had kept quiet. With prophetic insight, he commented on the peace-makers: "Life of Europe was not their concern; its means of livelihood was

---

[14] See author's, Intelligent Man's Review of Europe Today, London, 1933, p. 186.

not their anxiety. Their preoccupations, good and bad alike, related to frontiers and nationalities, to the balance of power, to imperial aggrandisement to the future enfeeblement of a strong and dangerous enemy, to revenge, and to the shifting by the victors of their unbearable financial burdens on to the shoulders of the defeated" [15].

Of the peace treaties, the most relevant to our subject is the treaty signed on 27 November 1919, at Neuilly-sur-Seine. The formal aim of the Treaty of Neuilly was spelled out in the Preamble: "to terminate a state of war between the Principal Allied and Associated Powers and Bulgaria" [16].

The Treaties brought about profound changes in the political frontiers of central and southern Europe. The former Austro-Hungarian Empire was transformed into a smaller Austria and a tiny Magyar Kingdom. Out of their provisions, emerged a new Czechoslovakia, an enlarged Rumania and an expanded Serbia. But the alteration of frontiers most significant for us occurred between Bulgaria and her neighbouring states, particularly Greece. As the subsequent discussion serves to emphasise, the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly seemed to vindicate nearly all the criticisms levelled by Keynes against the "peace-makers". The Bulgarians had to accept changes in the size of their country, the weakening of their military power and the payment of heavy indemnities.

---

15 See J.M. Keynes, The Economic Consequence of Peace, London, 1920, p. 51.

16 Treaty Series, I. H.M. Stationary Office, London, 1920, No. 5, p. 3.

As mentioned earlier, this process of fragmentation of states, often referred to as "Balkanisation", not only altered old political alliances but influenced substantially the ethnic and economic character of the Balkan peoples. The new states can be divided into two groups: those who gained territory, (e.g. Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Greece) and those who lost it (namely Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria). Thus Greece and Bulgaria were put on the opposite sides of the scale - the former, gaining from the war and the post-war settlements, wanted to retain the new status quo, and the latter, having lost, would wish to work towards a revision of the status quo in its favour.[17] According to one view, the Treaty of Neuilly was to be regarded as a "national catastrophe" for Bulgaria. Let us now turn to the details of the process of peace-making, the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly and their repercussions on the relations between Greece and Bulgaria in the subsequent period.

a. The Process of peace-making

There was a general impression among the victorious diplomats who had gathered at Paris that the prospect of gaining both territory and revenge had brought Bulgaria on to the German side during the First World War. Bulgaria had

---

17 In this connection, it is interesting to note that none of the defeated states, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria ever formally invoked Article XIX of the Covenant of the League, according to which the treaties could be reconsidered by the League members if the treaties have become inapplicable and their "continuance may endanger the peace of the world". See Pitman Potter, The Geneva Studies, August, 1941, Vol. XII, No. 2.

expected to gain in territory at the expense of her enemies, Serbia and Rumania; [18] it had wanted to annex a large area beginning from Turkish Thrace to the frontiers of Albania. And if Bulgaria's side had won the war, this would have emerged as the last solution in the interest of "permanent peace". But since it was on the losing side, it was natural on the part of the victors to assume that punishing Bulgaria was in fact in the best interests of "peace" in the Balkans.

The manner in which the terms of the treaty were offered to Bulgaria indicates that she had no choice but to accept. [19] The draft of the treaty of Neuilly was given to the Bulgarian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference on 19 September, 1919. In reply, Stambuliisky, the leader of the Bulgarian delegation and President of the Council of Ministers, submitted a memorandum in which historical facts were cited to show Bulgaria's title to Eastern and Western Thrace. This memorandum was prepared by two of Bulgaria's well-known diplomats, Gueshoff and Tsakoff. [20] At the time Bulgarian troops were still stationed in Eastern Thrace.

---

18 Temperley, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 448.

19 Ibid., and Speeches in British Parliament, op.cit.

20 Temperley, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 449.

One of the most significant points that concerned Bulgaria was the question of Western Thrace which was to become Greek territory. The relevant article of the Treaty of Neuilly contained the following stipulation: "Bulgaria renounces in favour of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers all rights and titles over the territories in Thrace which belonged to the Bulgarian Monarchy ... Bulgaria undertakes to accept the settlement made by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers ... The Principal Allied and Associated Powers undertake to ensure the economic outlets of Bulgaria to the Aegean Sea ... The conditions of this guarantee will be fixed at a later date". [21]

Bulgaria argued that the port of Kavalla, shattered at that time, was vital to her economy. [22] It also asked for "international guarantees for political independence and territorial integrity". [23] Stambuliisky made several diplomatic attempts to alter the provisions [24] of the treaty;

---

21 Article 48, the Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit.

22 In the eight years of fighting since 1912, the ports of Kavalla and Dedeagatch (Alexandroupolis) had been captured four times by the opposing sides.

23 Temperley, op.cit., Vol. V, pp. 414-415.

24 See particularly Articles 121-131; Treaty of Neuilly and its Annex, op.cit.

and he stayed on in Paris for two months towards this aim. But in the formal reply to Bulgaria's demands, the Allied Powers stated that she was responsible for "terrible evils" which had resulted from war. The text of the Note to Bulgaria described the reaction of the Allied Powers in these words: they "cannot lose sight of the fact that in ranging herself behind the Central Powers ... Bulgaria had broken the chief link between Russia and her Allies, opened to Germany the road to the East and thus rendered inevitable the prolongation of war".[25]

The Note, of course, concluded by disclaiming any "idea of vengeance"and gave Bulgaria ten days to sign the Treaty,[26] adding that the Allied Powers had already safeguarded Bulgaria's economic interests by guaranteeing an outlet to the Aegean. The same Note also admonished Bulgaria for her past mistakes and asked Bulgaria to behave in the future. If it accepted the terms and signed the treaty, it was assured of a speedy entry to the League of Nations.

Stambuliisky returned to Bulgaria exactly 10 days after the submission of the official allied Notice to Bulgaria and left Saratoff to inform the Council that they 'would sign but yield to force'. A few days later Stambuliisky wrote saying that he "would sign even a bad peace" and had "no illusions about it".[27]

---

[25] Temperley, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 414.

[26] Ibid., Vol. V, pp. 414-415.

[27] Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 415.

b. The Provisions of the Treaty

The frontiers of Bulgaria as fixed by the Treaty of Neuilly were as follows: [28]

(i) To the Serb-Croat-Slovene state, "from the confluence of the Timok and the Danube, which is the point common to the three frontiers of Bulgaria, Rumania and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State southwards to a selected point on the course of the Timok",

(ii) To Rumania, "from the Black Sea to the Danube, the frontier existing on 1 August, 1914 thence to the confluence of the Timok and the Danube, the principle channel of navigation of the Danube upstream".

(iii) To Greece, "... from the point east of Gabro-novo ..."; "... to the point where it leaves the watershed between the basins of Maesta-Karasu on the South and Maritsa on the North near Dibikli".

The provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly divided Macedonia [29] into three parts, the major share of which went to Greece. The rest was divided approximately equally between

---

28 Articles 27-35, Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit.; for general information on the redistribution of territories affecting Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria, see Albert Halàsz, New Central Europe, Budapest, 1928.

29 The Bulgarian claims to Macedonia were rejected. For reasons see Temperley, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 53.

Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. It was from this division of territory that a complex problem of minorities emerged. Here, the refugees uprooted from their natural homes formed committees and joined organisations. Discontent and poverty made these organisations/positive instruments of political agitation. They propagated independence, used slogans to join one or the other neighbouring states, and roamed across frontiers, keeping alive the political uncertainty.

It was not only the amount of territory that adversely influenced Bulgaria's external relations, but also its geographical situation. Three important regions, Thrace, Macedonia and Dobrudja, of historical, political and economic interest to Bulgaria, were distributed among her neighbours. Greece was allotted the whole Aegean littoral and Thrace (including part of anatolia and Smyrna), which made Greece a dominating "Aegean power". [30]

The main reason for which Bulgaria joined the Central Alliance during the first world war, was added to the Serbian

---

30 The population of Thrace at the time was one million inhabitants consisting of Greeks, Bulgars and Turks, many of them deeply mixed. They all, ipso facto, acquired Greek nationality (except those who became residents after January 1913). See Article 44, the Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit. Interestingly, even before this article was inserted in the treaty, Britain and France had already agreed to award the port of Kavalla to Greece.

territory.[31] The most fertile area, Dobroudja,[32] which produced wheat and earned for Bulgaria a substantial annual revenue, became Rumanian. For the loss of Thrace, the Principal Allied and Associated Powers undertook to "ensure the economic outlets of Bulgaria to the Aegean Sea"; the conditions of this guarantee, however, were to be fixed "at a later date".

In addition to the changes in territories, the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly also concerned limitations on Bulgaria's military and economic strength. It provided for a substantial reduction in Bulgaria's army frontier guards and capacities for the manufacture of armaments[33], and as mentioned earlier, the army was demobilised except for 20,000 men;[34] a special

---

[31] For Macedonia's strategic importance to Bulgaria, see Handbook of Macedonia, op.cit., pp. 69-72.

[32] For details of history of Dobroudja and how it continuously created conflict between Bulgaria and Rumania from 1913-1919, see J. Poppov, La Dobrouja et les relations Bulgaro-Roumaines, Liège, 1935, pp. 128-139.

[33] Articles 64-70, particularly Article 81, the Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit.

[34] For information on the composition of the Bulgarian armed forces and the provisions for their reduction see Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit., Tables I - V and Annex 7, pp. 233-238.

corps of 3,000 men was allowed to guard Bulgaria's 200 miles long frontier and the number of rifles was limited to 20,000 in all. Universal compulsory military service was abolished; and the import and export of all arms, munitions and war materials were strictly prohibited [35]. The number of officers, custom officials and forest guards was to be regulated in detail by the Inter Allied Military Commission of Control, which also was to assess the cost of occupation [36].

This Commission, which was to reside in Bulgaria for two years, was also given the same responsibility over Bulgaria's economic resources. It had the power and authority to determine the mode of payments of reparations in cash or kind, and to approve the amount of the debt assignment in Bulgaria's budget. Bulgaria was to pay for its upkeep and cost as long as the "treaty remained in force" [37].

The treaty also imposed the payment of reparations on Bulgaria. It was to pay an indemnity of 2,250 million levas

---

35 A state arms factory was set up by Bulgaria which produced the following equipment: 300 rifles and 3 machine guns a month, 40,000 bullets and 25 shells a day and 2 trench mortars a year.

36 LON Treaty Series, Protocol concerning the settlement by means of a lump sum of the cost of the interallied occupation in Bulgaria, signed at Sofia on 29 March 1924, (1924-1925), Volume XXXI, No. 781, p. 53.

37 Articles 94-97, Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit.

(or £90 million at the current rate of exchange).[38] In addition, the cost of military occupation was finally settled three years later by "adding a lump sum of 25 million gold francs". This was to be paid in half-yearly instalments, due in January and July, over a period of 37 years.[39] As a part of the indemnity, Bulgaria was to supply 33,000 sheep, 4,000 horses; 14,000 cows and 50,000 tons of coal a year for a period of five years free of transport costs.[40]

Not many voices were raised against this heavy economic burden on Bulgaria. At the Paris Conference, the Serb, Greek and the Rumanian delegates maintained that Bulgaria had the economic capacity to meet these war debts. It was estimated that for the first ten years Bulgaria's indebtedness would absorb one-tenth of the country's total revenue a year.[41] In fact, the economic reality was different; Bulgaria's budgets during the three years between 1915-1918 showed a total

---

38 For details of how the revised figure was arrived at, see "Bulgaria and Raparations" in Survey of International Affairs, British Institute of International Affairs, London, 1924, p. 324, and Special Supplement to The Times, London, 27 January 1925.

39 For distribution of the debt over a period, and Notes exchanged on the subject, see Le Temps, Paris, 4 and 7 August 1922.

40 Articles 127 and 128, the Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit. This was about 50 per cent of the total production of coal. See Bulgaria Basic Hand Book, prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, London, 1920, Part II (Economic), p. 11.

41 The Times, London, 16 and 18 July 1924. The total budget and revenue of Bulgaria stood at 7 billion Levas in September 1924.

deficit of two and a half million levas. Although the cost of Bulgaria's participation in the First World War [42] was borne mainly by Germany, Austria and Hungary, currency inflation continued throughout the war, and the number of industrial companies which invested in Sofia provided a false picture of her economic well being.

Thus, the economic punishment imposed on Bulgaria was rather severe. This is indicated in an article published on 29 July 1920 in New Europe: [43] "On what grounds is Bulgaria asked to pay 2.5 milliards 'reparation' ?. The demand for such an indemnity is all the more unjust since the Treaty stipulated the delivery by Bulgaria of a determined number of livestock ... also an annual delivery of 50,000 tons of coal to Serbia ... This is an unwarranted and unjustifiable

---

42 For the total amount of advance in cash and equipment by the three countries to Bulgaria, see Prost, op.cit., pp. 68-69 and Logio, op.cit., pp. 67-69.

43 29 July, 1920. For a similar view, see the Manchester Guardian, London, 30 August, 1920. For a full survey of economic consequences of the Treaty of Neuilly on Bulgaria for a whole decade, see Association Bulgare Pour la Paix et la Société des Nations, Le Traité de Neuilly et la Bulgarie économique, Rapport de l'Association bulgare pour la paix et la SDN présenté à la conférence de l'union internationale des Associations pour la Société des Nations à Madrid, 20 May, 1920, élaboré par B.P. Petkov, Sofia, May 1929.

decision, not only because all mines in Serbia were exclusively worked for and by the Germans, but also because Bulgaria does not produce sufficient coal for her own requirements".

(c) Subsequent Peace Treaties

The signing of the Treaty of Neuilly has not, as expected, settled the turmoil in the Balkans. Bulgaria was weakened, whereas Greece had emerged victorious, becoming a dominant Aegean Power. The enlarged Greek power was to come into conflict with Turkey, and the changing fortunes in these wars were to be reflected in the changing provisions of the Treaties of Sèvres (1920) and of Lausanne (1923). Supported by the British and French fleets, the Greek army started offensive operations on 20 June 1920 against the Turkish nationalists and occupied large areas in Asia Minor. The draft of the Treaty of Sèvres was expected to settle this conflict. But, as discussed below, the Treaty, signed on 10 August, 1920, between Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan (known as the "Principal Allied and Associated Powers") and Greece could not be ratified. According to its provisions, Western Thrace was to be ceded to Greece and Eastern Thrace to Turkey. Smyrna and the Ionian Islands were to be brought under Greek control for five years. Turkey was to recognise Greek sovereignty over Lemos, Samothrace, Mitylene, Chios, Samos and Nikeria. While the Dodecanese were to go to Italy; and Constantinople and the zone of the straits were to be internationalised [44].

---

44 LON, Treaty Series, Traité relatif à la Thrace, signed at Sèvres on 10 August, Vol. 28, No. 710, pp. 226-242. For the text of the article of the Treaty of Sèvres, see Official Journal, June 1923, Annex 494 a, pp. 643-4, and Document (C. 307.1923, VII.). For comments on how the treaties were drafted by the Supreme Council of the Great Powers and dictated to the small Balkan states, see Ferdinand Schevill, The History of the Balkan Peninsula, from the earliest times to the present day, New York 1922, p. 502. For text see LON, Treaty Series, Traité concernant la Protection des Minorités en Grèce, Vol. 28, No. 711, pp. 244-265.

The main objective of the treaty of Sèvres was to implement Article 48 of the Treaty of Neuilly whereby Bulgaria renounced all rights and titles to Thrace and transferred them to Greece. According to its provisions, "freedom of transit", over the territories and in the port was granted to Bulgaria. The question of the Port of Dedeagatch was to be settled by the League of Nations.

Attention may be drawn here to an important fact about participation at the conference which drafted the Treaty of Sèvres. Neither the Turkish [45] nor the Bulgarian delegates,[46] whose territories were directly influenced, were permitted to attend this conference. Their absence was to be responsible for further aggravating the conflict in the Balkans and make it impossible to implement the provision of the treaty. After all, it was hard to expect that the non-participants would readily accept provisions which were considered particularly harmful to their national interests.

---

45 The Turkish delegation was led by Tewfik-Pasha, who was interned in Versailles and was prohibited from taking a train to Paris. For details see Driault and l'Heritier, op.cit., Paris, 1926, p. 379.

46 The Bulgarian chief delegate Stambuliisky was prevented by the French authorities from crossing the Italian frontier until the session had practically ended. See J.D. Bourchier, The Bulgarian Peace Treaty, London, 1943, p.3.

On 11 October 1922, an armistice was signed between Turkey and the Allies by which Turkey took over the administration of Constantinople and Greece surrendered Adrianople to the "Grand National Assembly of Turkey" pending a new Treaty which was to revise the Treaty of Sèvres. A separate military Convention was signed in Constantinople between the Allied Generals, Turkey and Greece. The new balance of power between Greece and Turkey, established as a result of the fighting subsequent to the Treaty of Sèvres, was to form the basis of the discussion of the terms of settlement at the Lausanne Conference.

The Lausanne Conference opened on 21 November 1922 under the chairmanship of Lord Curzon. Ismet Pasha represented Turkey, Venizelos Greece and Stambuliisky Bulgaria. Although Bulgaria was not a participant to this Conference, it was invited to state its case on the 'Aegean outlet'. The lengthy deliberations at the Conference [47] brought about

---

47 The Treaty of Lausanne was signed on 24 July 1923, and replaced the Treaty of Sèvres. There were altogether 17 instruments of the Treaty of Lausanne, inter-alia, protocols relating to the protection of minorities in Thrace and other territories ceded by Turkey to Greece including Karagach. See Records of Proceedings and Draft Terms of Peace, Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, (1922-1923), H.M. Stationary Office, London, 1923.

further shifts of territory, and hence of the balance of power in the Balkans. As a result, Turkey recovered Smyrna, Constantinople and Eastern Thrace [48].

Our main concern in this study is not with the evolution of relationship between Turkey and Greece but with that between Bulgaria and Greece. Bulgaria's main interests at the Conference were: Securing an outlet to the Aegean, settling the problems of refugees from Thrace, and preserving its territorial integrity as a disarmed nation. Bulgaria and Greece were to find themselves in dispute on most of these points at the Lausanne Conference. The question of the outlet was too complicated to be decided in a day, and it took several days before the Conference came to the conclusion to leave the matter to a sub-commission. The sub-commission was appointed to consider the Aegean outlet in two separate parts: (a) demilitarised zones on the frontiers of Eastern Thrace, and (b) railway communication with the Aegean and provision of a port for Bulgaria at Dedeagatch.

On the question of the demilitarised zone, Bulgaria referred to the Treaty of Neuilly, whose provisions in no way imposed such an obligation and offered ethnological reasons for not accepting such a proposition.

The Turkish delegate, on the other hand, proposed that the boundary between Greece and Turkey revert to the line drawn at Marista in 1913, and demanded that a plebiscite be organised for Western Thrace. According to Venizelos, the frontier changes since 1919 had seriously influenced the ethnic composition of population in both the eastern and

---

48 LON, Treaty Series, Protocol Relating to the Settlement of Refugees in Greece and the Creation for this Purpose of a Refugee Settlement Commission, Vol. 20, No. 503, pp. 31-39.

western parts of Thrace.[49] Under the circumstances, a plebiscite would be meaningless, and was therefore unacceptable to Greece. The delegates of Rumania and Serbia supported Greece; they also maintained that a plebiscite was not necessary,[50] since the question of western Thrace had already been settled by the Treaty of Neuilly. Bulgaria, on the other hand, took the same view as Turkey and pressed for a reversion to the 1913 position, and a revision of the clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly. Once again, Bulgaria and Greece were on opposite sides, whether it was for waging wars or establishing peace.

Bulgaria favoured the solution that pending the final settlement of western Thrace, it should be administered by a neutral international authority.[51] In any case, its administrative control should rest in the hands of the Allied Powers rather than Greece. It wanted to assure passage for commercial purposes without having to pass through hostile territory under Greek control. Furthermore,

---

49 For the number of Muslims who had emigrated from Bosnia, see Driault and l'Héritier, op.cit., p. 417.

50 Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, op.cit., pp. 31-32.

51 See the Report of the Sub-Commission, set up to examine the conditions of the demilitarised zone and the measure to assure Bulgaria a free outlet to the Aegean Sea, ibid., pp. 27-28 and 77.

it also wanted the territory to be neutralised, and special facilities to be granted to it for the construction of a railway line connecting with the main port of Kavalla.

The Bulgarian President, Stambuliisky urged that the time had come to pay some concrete attention to Bulgaria's needs. He stated: "The Bulgarian people although seriously affected by the Treaty of Peace, have chosen ... an attitude of complete loyalty in the firm conviction that the attitude would be appreciated at the right moment ... In my opinion, the right moment has come ... ."[52]

Lord Curzon, the chairman of the conference, replied that Serbia and Rumania had simply enunciated a principle; its practicability, however, needed to be examined. [53]

It is interesting to note, however, that at Lausanne, both the Greek and Bulgarian delegates argued that the assignment of territory to Turkey had nothing to do with the Treaty of Sèvres, but only with the Treaty of Neuilly. But in the meantime, the interests of the Great Powers had shifted in such a manner that they were not eager to keep promises made in 1919 to Greece and Bulgaria. At this conference, the major concern of the Big Powers was to keep the Strait of Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus internationalised so that their commerce would not be adversely affected. Their main objective was to declare the principle of "freedom of transit" and of navigation by

---

52 Ibid., p. 31.

53 Ibid., p. 33.

sea and by air in the three areas known as the Straits". [54]

Bulgaria's case was summed up by its chief delegate, Premier Stambuliisky who argued that if the control of Thrace was left in the hands of Greece, Bulgaria would have to pass through hostile territory for any commercial arrangements. It therefore demanded that Thrace be neutralised and that Bulgaria be given special facilities to build a railway. [55] and a port at Dedeagatch. Bulgaria pointed out that the occupation of Thrace by Greece would not only handicap but would almost destroy its commerce; [56] in any case, Greece, unlike Bulgaria, was not commercially dependent on the ports of Kavalla and Dedeagatch. Giving away Thrace to Greece would thus enclose Bulgaria permanently and make it partially land-locked. [57]

---

54 LON, Treaty Series, Régime of the Straits, signed 24 July 1924 at Lausanne, Vol. 28, No. 702, pp. 116-137.

55 The railways of Western Thrace were under the control of Compagnie Orientale de Chemin de Fer. The main port of Kavalla was not linked with Bulgarian railroad system. Dedeagatch was connected with a rail link, but was not adequate for use for heavy traffic. Both of these ports were important to Bulgaria for its trade.

56 H.F. Armstrong, "Bulgaria and the Aegean" in Foreign Affairs, New York, October 1926, p. 148.

57 According to one view, the blocking of the hinterland of central Europe hampered not onlv Bulgaria, but the whole of Eastern Europe. B. Lubin, in La Bulgarie et la mer Egée, quotes the President of National Committee of Geography in Sofia as saying that this blocking off the economic life of the area was a 'whim of European politics'. Sofia, 1946. p. 88. For a similar viewpoint also see Armstrong, op.cit., p. 148.

The following extracts from Stambuliisky's speech indicate the economic importance of these ports to Bulgaria: "It is only by direct possession of the territory in the neighbourhood of the railway and the port or by placing that territory under a completely autonomous regime economically tied to Bulgaria by special stipulations that the port can be constructed, controlled and developed in accordance with the economic interests of Bulgaria". "... It is not only possible but also psychologically inadmissible that the access to the Bulgarian outlet on the sea would pass across Turkey or Greek territory". With half a century of conflicts between Bulgaria and Greece in his mind, he pleaded fervently against the creation of a basis for further conflict. "... I beg you not to leave us any grounds on which new passions and dissensions may arise between two sorely-tried nations Bulgaria and Greece ...". [58]

Greece also argued that the Thracian outlet to the Aegean Sea was economically important to her. [59] According to Venizelos, the chief Greek delegate at the Lausanne

---

58 Lausanne Conference for the Near East, op.cit., p. 33.

59 Meanwhile, the Greek press carried on a campaign to show that Bulgaria had no need of the economic outlet to the Aegean. It was pointed out that Bulgaria should be satisfied with the Danube route to Central Europe. An interesting analogy was employed; if Switzerland and Czechoslovakia could get along without a sea outlet, why not Bulgaria?. The Bulgarians replied that the analogy was invalid, and they accused the Greeks of showing a "mentality of a nation suffering from marine hypertrophy". Le Messager d'Athènes, Athens (a digest of Greek press published in English), 1923.

Conference. Greece was not a small state. It occupied geographically a strategic position with regard to the Aegean sea and possessed the vitality to become a "big Mediterranean Power" [60]. Venizelos' counter-proposal was that the utilisation of the port and its navigation on the Maritsa should be guaranteed by an international commission, but the sovereignty over Thrace should belong to Greece [61]. He said that he "was ready to give all necessary guarantees with a view to the utilisation by Bulgaria of the Maritsa, the railway and the port of Dedeagatch under the control of an international commission, similar to the Danube Commission" [62].

Venizelos further proposed an arrangement by which Bulgaria could enjoy some commercial rights similar to those

---

60 Driault and l'Héritier, op.cit., V. p. 393.

61 For a discussion on this arrangement similar to those enjoyed by Yugoslavia in the Salonika zone, see H.F. Armstrong, "The Saloniki Dispute" in Foreign Affairs", September 1925 - July 1926, p. 278.

62 Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, op.cit., pp. 38-39.

enjoyed by Yugoslavia in the Salonika zone. [63] According to these provisions, Bulgaria was to obtain a site on the Aegean coast on a lease of ninety-nine years, and to establish Bulgarian administration in the harbour eventually to be constructed there, while the railway connecting the new port was to be placed under the supervision of an international commission". [64]

This new arrangement was officially submitted to the Bulgarian delegation on 26 January 1923 and rejected by them. Similarly, the Bulgarian delegation refused to consider harbour rights at Salonika. The matter stood where it was at the end of 1924. The Greek government agreed to give Bulgaria certain facilities in Dedeagatch which was re-christened Alexandroupolis. But the two governments were negotiating for a narrow gauge railway from Petritch which would link Bulgaria more directly with Greece to their mutual benefit. [65]

---

63 The Turkish delegation proposed a solution similar to the one it had arrived at with Iraq. It was later inserted in Article 3, of the Treaty of Lausanne, and reads: "The frontier between Turkey and Iraq shall be laid down in a friendly arrangement to be concluded between Turkey and Great Britain within nine months. In the event of no agreement being reached between the two states within the time mentioned, the dispute shall be referred to the Council". For the text see LON, Treaty Series, Treaty of Peace (Lausanne), 5 September, 1924, Vol. 28, No. 7012, p.12.

64 An international commission was to be appointed to investigate possibilities of constructing and equipping the port of Dedeagatch, Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, op.cit., p. 79 and Appendix on "Bulgarian Economic Outlet to Aegean Sea," No. 28 A. There were similarities between Bulgaria's and Yugoslavia's demands for an outlet. But the latter country settled its difference. For a comparison, see Armstrong, op.cit., p.148.

65 This was a very important route, itbeing the main line of communication from the south west frontier of Bulgaria; see Handbook of Macedonia, op.cit., p. 281.

Meanwhile, Greece settled her differences with Yugoslavia, creating a free zone of Salonika for fifty years. This zone was inaugurated on 18 October 1925 [66]. The manner in which Greece came to this decision and the period involved in negotiations between these two countries provides a significant background to Greece and Bulgarian relations on the eve of the shooting at Demir-Kapu.

Now, Yugoslavia considered that the port of Salonika was the natural outlet to the Mediterranean for trade from the South [67]. Therefore, when the question of the administration of the "Free Zone" in Salonika came to be discussed, the Yugoslav demands were high. They demanded the control and exploitation of the railway from Ghevgeli to the port of Salonika and the right of extension of the Serbian zone on the harbour, so that goods arriving from Czechoslovakia and other neighbouring countries could be directly transported to other Greek ports. And finally the recognition that the Slavs of Macedonia were not to be considered "Bulgars" but Serbs.

The Greek government considered these demands as diminution of its sovereignty and offered instead to rebuild the railway line or appoint a permanent League of Nations official. The negotiations between the two countries came to an impasse on 27 November 1924 [68].

---

66 Article 7, Traité d'Alliance Gréco-Serbo, text in Guéchoff, op.cit., pp. 161-165 and Ivanoff, op.cit., pp. 196-197.

67 For details, J. Movrogordato, op.cit., p. 152

68 See proposal relating to the Greek Minorities in Bulgaria and Bulgarian Minorities in Greece, LON, Treaty Series, Vol. XXIX, 1924, pp. 117-121 and 124-127.

Disappointed with Yugoslavia, Greece attempted to negotiate with Bulgaria. On 29 September 1924, the Bulgarian and Greek delegates meeting at the Assembly of the League of Nations signed a protocol which provided that each power should appoint its official adviser to implement the minority clauses of the Treaty of Sèvres. The protocol was never ratified [69] by the Greek National Assembly and led to the fall of yet another government, that of Sophoulis, who was replaced by Michalakoupoulis [70]. His government lasted about eight months from 6 October 1924 to 25 June 1925.

This protocol created dissatisfaction in the most unexpected quarter. Yugoslavia considered its provisions an arbitrary recognition of the existence of "Bulgar" minorities in Greece which could lead Bulgaria to claim

---

69 Venizelos defended this refusal on the ground that the representative of Greece who signed the protocol was not authorised to append the final clause which was considered by the Greek National Assembly at variance with the general provisions of the Minority Treaties. Minutes of the Thirty-third Session of the Council, 14 March 1925, Official Journal, April 1925, pp. 478-482.

70 Movrogordato, op.cit.

privileges for "Bulgar" Minorities in Serbia [71]. The Yugoslav government was annoyed with Greece for signing such a protocol and this annoyance manifested in the renunciation of Greco-Serbian alliance of 1913 [72]. The reason for this was that the Yugoslav government denied that any of the Slavs living there could ever be Bulgarians and therefore brought pressure on the government to reject to ratify the protocol.

Another cause of the continuing controversy between Greece and Turkey [73] had been the question of the Patriarchate[74]. On 30 January 1925, it assumed proportions of a major conflict. The Turks expelled the oecumenical Patriarch Constantine II from Constantinople. He had been elected only six weeks before upon the death of Gregory VII. The ground for expulsion given by Turkey was that although he was born in Turkey, he was not established in Constantinople and was an 'exchangeable Greek' within the Minority Clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne. Greece protested and proposed under Article 44 of the Treaty of Lausanne and appealed to the

---

71 Official Journal, April 1925, ibid.

72 In fact the alliance had already lapsed in 1923. E.S. Forster, op.cit., p. 154-157.

73 Under the Turkish rule the Patriarch at Constantinople did not have only religious, but also civil functions. Later on, the office became an anachronism and modern Turkey considered this a focus of political agitation. A Short History of Modern Greece, op.cit., p. 154.

74 At the Conference of Lausanne the Turks consented to the maintenance of the oecumenical Patriarch, provided he exercised no civil or administrative functions.

League of Nations [75]. Meanwhile the expelled Patriarch was persuaded to resign.

The external controversies with Yugoslavia and Turkey and continuing deterioration of its relations with Bulgaria led to internal dissensions in Greece, which in turn furnished an opportunity for a military coup d'état. The leader of this coup d'état was General Pangalos [76] who intended to divert

---

75 For Greek's appeal under Article II, paragraph 2 to the League of Nations and text of Resolution for an advisory opinion of the PCIJ on 14 March 1925, see Council Minutes, Thirty-Third Session, Official Journal, April 1925, pp. 487-488. The question was later withdrawn from the Agenda in June 1925. Ibid., pp. 853-854.

76 General Pangalos was a Minister of War in Colonel Gonatâs's government in 1922 and a Minister of "Law and Order" under Papanastasiou in 1924. At the time of the takeover, he was a deputy for Macedonia in the National Assembly and a Commander-in-Chief of the Greek army in Thrace. According to a contemporary commentator, General Pangalos hoped to become a modern Pericles, rebuild Athens and create a new era of Greek glory and culture. Dr. H.S. Pritchett's Report cited in Observation on Egypt, Palestine and Greece, Carnegie Endownment, International Conciliations, December 1926, No. 225. General Pangalos quarrelled with the Refugee Settlement Commission and arrested one of the Greek officials. F. Sheville, op.cit., New York, 1933, p. 546. In one of the first Decrees, General Pangalos announced death penalty against speculators in the Civil Service. Two of its members were hanged as an example to others on the charge of crimes committed before the Decree.

attention to the pending Aegean problem seized power on 25 June 1925. In his first speech to the National Assembly, which adjourned immediately afterwards for six months, he emphasised that his government would give priority to the solution of the refugee problem, which plagued Greek Politics.

General Pangalos formed a cabinet with himself as Prime Minister and Hadjikyriakos as Minister of Marine and Foreign Affairs ad interim. Admiral Gourdouriotis assumed office as a provisional President. Once again, Parliament was dissolved, martial law was proclaimed and the government assumed the power to legislate by Decree. The new constitution issued by Proclamation on 30 September, provided for a president to be elected for a term of five years; a Chamber and an Upper House under the title of the Senate consisting of 150 members, of whom 100 were to be elected by parliamentary vote, 30 by various professional co-operation and guilds and 20 by the Senate itself [77].

The coup d'état was apparently received with such an air of optimism that Sir Arthur Salter [78] remarked that the Macedonians will do for Greece what the Huguenots expelled from France under the Edict of Nantes did for England.

---

77 In January 1926, General Pangalos changed his plans and announced that elections had been postponed, Movrogordato, op.cit., p. 154 and E.S. Forster, op.cit., p. 159.

78 Sir Arthur Salter, Memoirs of a Public Servant, London, 1961, Chapter VI.

But at the time, it was only the Italian Minister in Athens who rushed to congratulate General Pangalos.[79] This was in a sense a preview of new trends in Greece's relations with Italy.

In the foreign sphere General Pangolas had no political doctrine to impose. His main preoccupation appeared to be a dictator-president, to extend the power to the Royal family and exclude Venizelos. Meanwhile he had to face the internal crises as they developed. Most of the political leaders were exiled and no criticisms were allowed tobe published in the Press. Troubles however continued on the Macedonian frontier which culminated in what was now no more an affray in October at Demir-Kapu.

---

[79] Pangalos became President on 18 April 1926, by allowing only ten electoral divisions to participate in voting and eliminating all other candidates. E.S. Forster, op.cit., pp. 161-162.

CHAPTER III: Diplomatic Probings after Demir-Kapu

In 1925, after the incident at Demir-Kapu, the approaches towards settlement of what was now rapidly becoming a dispute between two nations may be said to have a certain hierarchy. Negotiations began within 48 hours of the incident on 19 October, 1925, at various levels: the local staff at the frontier posts, the chargé d'Affairs at the embassies/ legations and finally the Foreign Secretary and the head of the government. One thread is discernible throughout these unsuccessful parleys and that is that both sides attempted to hold on to their fixed postures, the burden of which was to prove the other side as the aggressor.

The diplomatic probes described below cannot be considered as the outcome of a co-ordinated and definitive policy line handed down from the top echelons to the lower ones. These attempts were nothing but unrehearsed actions to settle the border incident as "one among many". The fact that the dispute is later submitted by Bulgaria to the League of Nations for settlement was neither foreseen nor anticipated. It was the result of a tide of events on which Greece and Bulgaria had no control.

a. Negotiations: Level I

While Sofia and Athens were planning military manoeuvres, the local staff accepted the incident as one of the many that took place regularly on the frontier between Bulgaria and Greece. They made what later turned out to be unsuccessful attempts at pourparler.

The first indication of an approach to negotiate is given in a message which arrived from the Bulgarian Lt. Col. Goleminov in Petritch on 21 October 1925 to his counterpart in Demir-Hissar stating that shooting had occurred at Demir-Kapu. Goleminov requested that a certain time and place be fixed to "await the news of the frontier". To this the Greek officer hastened to reply that an order for cease-fire had been given, and that "a receiving order will come for a rendez-vous". A reminder was apparently sent, to which there was no answer. The next day an unofficial conversation took place between the Greek Lt. Col. Sergios and a Bulgarian captain (name not mentioned in Bulgarian documents). Neither of these officers was apparently aware of the instructions which were under way from the Third Army Corps of the Greek Army, to proceed to Petritch.

The following is a brief summary of what passed between them, as recorded in Bulgarian documents, [67] to illustrate their efforts to find a peaceful solution. Lt. Col. Sergios, walked near the frontier-line and asked the Bulgarian Captain if he had called him, to which the Bulgarian replied in the negative. Sergios then asked him as to whether he knew "who had begun the incident ?". The Bulgarian Captain

---

67 LON Archives, Recapitulation des évenements concernant l'incident Gréco-Bulgaro de Demir-Kapu, jusqu'au moment de l'intervention du Conseil de la S.D.N., (The French translation was given by the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), File No. 48129.

explained that all he knew was that the original shooting had occurred on 19 October. The Greek Lt. Col. then said, "Bien, pour notre sentinelle tuée nous ne faisons pas d'objection, mais pour la mort de notre Capitaine Vassiliadis, nous vous tenons responsable". At this, the Bulgarian captain seemed surprised, saying that "no one had seen Vassiliadis' white flag nor heard a bugler", adding that he thought that the firing must be stopped. The conversation, as recorded in the documents of the Bulgarian government continues: "Lt. Col. Sergios a fait un mouvement enhaussant les épaules, fait incliner sa tête sans rien répondre". As if on an afterthought, the Greek added: "malgré tout, laissons ... de côté. Je ne veux pas tirer sur les vôtres et vous ne faites pas tirer les vôtres sur nous".

The Greeks did not deny that such an attempt was made by the Bulgarians on 21 October. Their version was that a Bulgarian did come to the Kula Bridge but as no Greek superior officer was present, "no interview took place".[68] Another Bulgarian Commander of the Petritch sector tried to telephone to a superior officer of the Greek army from another point across the frontier. The result of this attempt was apparently also unsuccessful.[69]

---

68 LON Archives,
Documents Communicated by the Greek Authorities,
File No. 48130.

69 However, a statement of Colonel Zlateff to the Press appears to have emphasised that no meeting at any level had taken place between them and the Greeks. Récapitulation des événements.,op.cit.

b. Negotiations: Level II

As soon as the Government at Sofia learnt that Greek troops had formed an effective line at Levonavo with a whole battalion, the Bulgarian Chief of Staff instructed Sveti-Vratch to "proceed to examine the cause of the incident and observe all the rules of the frontier guards". [70] It is not possible to deduce from the documents submitted by the Bulgarian Government whether the instructions to examine the cause of the Demir-Kapu incident were drafted after the Secretary-General to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minkoff had telephoned to the Greek chargé d'affaires Rosetti in Sofia. [71] What is evident, however, is that Minkoff telephoned him, as he had done on several previous occasions. Minkoff asked Rosetti to send a telegram to Athens immediately. He further emphasised the need to inform the Greek Commander in Salonika to verify the cause of the shooting at Demir-Kapu. Rosetti, for this part, assured him that this would be done. [72]

However, on 22 October, Rosetti requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Athens to give immediate orders to the military to cease fire and telephoned to assure Minkoff accordingly. [73] The same evening, the British chargé d'affaires met Rosetti for further information on Demir-Kapu. Rosetti informed him that to his knowledge there were no new developments. In reply to this, the British chargé d'affairs quoted the statement of the American chargé d'affairs to the effect that the Greeks were inviting trouble to 'divert public opinion' from problems at home. Rosetti naturally

---

70 See Résumé prepared by the Commission, op.cit., and Ministère des Affaires étrangères de Bulgarie, op.cit.

71 Récapitualation des événements, op. cit.

72 Ibid.

73 The interview later formed the text of the note verbale to the Bulgarian government. LON, Document (C. 624, M. 213, 1925).

denied this and stated that the incident was nothing but the habitual occurrence at the frontier created by the "Comitadjis". [74] Meanwhile, firing continued at the frontier. The military situation seemed to deteriorate to the point where an interview with the Greek chargé d'affairs was inadequate to offer any solutions. So the Bulgarian chargé d'affairs at Athens sought an interview with the Greek Acting Foreign Minister, Admiral Alexandros Hadjikryiakos. The interview took place at 2 p.m. on 22 October.

c. Negotiations: Level III

For about half an hour in this interview the Bulgarian chargé d'affairs emphasised the need to take immediate action at the frontier and warned the Greek Foreign Minister of the complications that might result from delay. The Bulgarian chargé d'affairs requested Admiral Hadjikyriakos to intervene so that the local frontier authorities on both sides could immediately meet to negotiate. The attitude of the Greek Foreign Minister appeared firm. He denied the assumption that Demir-Kapu was 'a simple frontier incident' initiated by criminal elements. He therefore argued that the military authorities must be given powers "to undertake all measures that are judged necessary". Admiral Hadjikyriakos stressed the point that Greece was preparing to ask for "just indemnities" with an apology from the Bulgarian government. [75]

The interview did not end there. The Bulgarian chargé d'affaires repeated that first priority must be given to stop the shooting, pointing out that "if this was not done, further

---

74 Ibid

75 Ibid

complications are likely to result." Admiral Hadjikyriakos insisted that it was the Bulgarians who had made an "unpremeditated attack".

The note verbale from the Foreign Ministry to the Bulgarian legation was in the main a protest against Bulgaria's "unqualified aggression". It alleged that the 19 October incident was unexpected, and that Bulgarians had opened fire without provocation on the Greek posts and taken them by surprise. The most significant passage in the note related to the allegation that the continued violation of Greek territory and its occupation by Bulgarian troops had been verified by reconnaissance. It was for that reason that Greece had issued instructions to its military commanders to take all measures to repulse the invasion.

In addition, it claimed: "At this moment, the violations of the territory of our country still continued. Some of the territory being occupied by the Bulgarians has since been ascertained by reconnaissance". The note, declared the intention of Greece to take any measures which would safeguard its territorial integrity,[76] and repeatedly employed the terms "premeditation" and "aggression".

This note verbale was forwarded to Rosetti at Sofia to be delivered to the Bulgarian Government with copies to the

---

[76] In his words: "... les assaillants bulgares ... avaient pénétré très profondément en territoire grec et en avait occupé une grande portion". Letter from Greek Charge d'Affaires Dedarmis, Berne to Sir Eric Drummond, 24 October 1925, LON, Document (C. 634, M. 213, 1925 VII) and The New York Times, 23 October 1925.

[77] Ibid.

Greek Missions in Belgrade, Berlin, Bucharest, London, Paris and Rome. The Bulgarian missions in London, Paris and Rome were also informed of the grave turn the incident was taking. While the Greek Acting Foreign Minister had declined to negotiate with the Bulgarians, the Greek Foreign Secretary, Lysimachos Caftanzolou appeared to have pleaded for some moderation.

News of the Greek troop advance occupation of Petritch and the ultimatum of Bulgaria demanding apologies and indemnities were sent from Athens by Sir Milne Cheetham to the Foreign Office in London. He did not see any "reason to fear serious complications", but the Foreign Office was "uneasy", possibly expecting difficulties, if Yugoslavia had aligned with the Bulgarians in producing the incident. The Swedish and the Italian ambassadors visited the Foreign Office on 22 October expressing their concern. But they were informed that "the available information was too meagre" to warrant any hasty action; it was expected that this incident was like "one of the many" that are in the habit of taking place in the Balkan countries". The reaction in Paris and Rome also ran along similar lines [78].

On 21 October the chargé d'affairs in Athens sought another interview with Admiral Hadjikyriakos. He reiterated the need for an enquiry, and proposed that a mixed commission be appointed, insisting that the situation be dealt with according to earlier precedents. As the interview proceeded, the Third Army Corps was awaiting instructions to advance.

---

78 This point is well brought out in J. Barros, The League of Nations and the Great Powers: The Greek-Bulgarian incident 1925, Oxford, pp. 27-30.

further into Bulgarian territory [79] (about which the Bulgarian chargé d'affairs had no knowledge).

In Sofia, three times in succession Minkoff, repeated his proposal for the appointment of a Mixed Commission of Enquiry. [80] He received a vague reply from Rosetti, who himself appeared ill-informed at that point about developments and at the frontier had no specific instructions. Up to that point the incident remained at the level at which the Secretary-General to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could handle it on a routine basis. The time was soon to arrive when Bulgaria had to think of another approach.

On 22 October, equipped with fresh instructions from Sofia, the Bulgarian chargé d'affairs this time had a meeting with President Pangalos himself. The Bulgarian chargé d'affairs submitted that the establishment of a Greco-Bulgarian Mixed Commission was the only solution to terminate an "unfortunate border incident". To this the President of the Republic of Greece replied that "unless and until Bulgarians evacuate Greek territory", no proposal would be

---

79 In this connection, see Telegram from Hadjikyriakos, Athens, to Sir Eric Drummond, 24 October, 1925, in which the Acting Foreign Minister indicates that unless Bulgaria left the 'whole territory', Greece would take steps for 'legitimate defence'. Text in Document, (C. 636, M. 215, 1925).

80 LON Archives, Sur les démarches faites par le chargé d'affaires de Bulgarie à Athènes auprès du Gouvernement hellénique au sujet d'incident. Athens, 19 November 1925, File No. 48129. (Original text in French).

accepted by his Government.[81]

Two important points emerged from these interviews. Firstly, that it was General Pangalos who informed the Bulgarian chargé d'affaires that Greek forces were at that minute entering Bulgarian territory to safeguard their positions.[82] In fact, at that time the Greek Army had already occupied the heights of Pipernica, Hodpvo, Spant-Sova, Kula-Marnipole on the left and the crest of South Petritch.[83] The second point of the conversation was that on the same evening Bulgarian chargé d'affairs informed the Greek Government that the League of Nations had been approached.

The postures that the two parties took at the above interviews reveal that Bulgaria kept the door open for further negotiations insisting that they should proceed to establish the responsibilities and arrange indemnities. The Bulgarian government appeared ready to inflict exemplary punishment on the military commanders responsible, to express its regret to the Greek government and lastly to pay a

---

81 Ibid. Also see the news item concerning this interview which was headlines "The Greeks decline an Enquiry". The New York Times, New York, 23 October, 1925.

82 Order of Operation No. 502/2/21-10-25 (an extract from the secret report of the Military Attachés)in Documents submitted by Greek Government op.cit.

83 Telegram from the Foreign Ministry in Athens to the Greek Legation in Berne, conveyed by Dedramis to Sir Eric Drummond, giving notification of the advance of Greek troops to Petritch 'because Bulgaria continues to occupy territory: 24 October, 1925. Text in Document (C. 634, M. 213, 1925).

substantial indemnity [84] to the families of the men killed. To the Bulgarians it appeared a simple frontier incident, and they therefore insisted throughout on the need to make an immediate enquiry and to order a cease fire.

On the other hand, both the Greek President and the Greek Foreign Minister assumed that the Bulgarian attack was premeditated and was perpetrated by 'irregular and irresponsible' elements. The Greek government, according to them, was therefore obliged to undertake all necessary measures in order to assure their security and that of the national territory". [85] They thought that since the Greek army was unaware of the designs and intentions of the Bulgarians, it was necessary for it to proceed to contain strategic points.

The Bulgarian Legation at Athens were equally engaged in transmitting messages. The Bulgarian Legations in Rome, London, Paris, Belgrade and Bucharest were also being continuously informed of further developments. After the shooting at Demir-Kapu, the chargé d'affaires were in constant contact with one another. The Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, Kalfoff, now looked for diplomatic support to "influence" Greece. The Bulgarian Legations, particularly in London, Paris and Rome, were informed in detail of Bulgarian proposals for a Mixed Commission. It seemed that the Bulgarian Government intended to demonstrate that a

---

84 The Bulgarian charge d'affaires conveyed his government's offer to pay a sum of three million French francs calculated at the then prevailing rate of exchange as an equitable indemnity to the families of the men killed. Démarches faites par le chargé d'affaires, op.cit.; Also The New York Times, where the demand of Athens for indemnity was estimated at two million French francs. 22 October 1925.

85 Telegram from Hadjikyriakos to Drummond, op.cit.

frontier incident ought to be nipped in the bud. It should be noted here that none of the reports from the firing-line ever mentioned that Bulgarians had occupied Greek territory.[86] Neither did the Greek Government accuse Bulgaria of premeditated attack.[87] The note verbale to Kalffoff, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in Sofia merely informed the Bulgarian Government that Greek troops had already advanced in their territory. There was no formal declaration of war between Greece and Bulgaria; and yet the military reaction and the public opinion in both countries did not give it any other name.[88]

Meanwhile the Greek Government was also occupied in showing food faith. After the delivery to Sofia of a note verbale specifying that Bulgaria should pay an indemnity to Greece, Dendramis, the Greek chargé d'affaires at Berne made another important move. He informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Osten Undén, of the conflict with Bulgaria. The line taken in the letter was that the Bulgarian government "should" officially express its regret and mete out exemplary punishment to those who were responsible for the incident." [89] This was done privately to

---

[86] The New York Times, 24 October 1925, and F. de Gerando, L'incident Gréco-Bulgare. Sofia, 1925, p.5.

[87] Telegram, from Dendramis, Legation Greek in Berne to the League Conveying Message Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Athens. 24 October 1925, Document (C. 634.213.1925).

[88] See the report of a special correspondent from Levonavo in which he describes the arrival of a Greek battery of mountain guns and comments: "... The present situation is absurd, either Greece and Bulgaria are at war or they are not...". The Times, London, 26 October 1925.

[89] Text of note verbale in Document (C.634, M. 213, 1925).

impress on Sweden that the Greek government expected some sort of compensation for the Bulgarian violation of its territory.

At this point, it is necessary to pause and reflect on the reasons for the posture of Greece in face of the Demir-Kapu incident. It is significant to note that instead of directly approaching the League for action in connection with Bulgaria's unqualified aggression, Greece chose to deliver an ultimatum to Bulgaria and sought mediation from Sweden. The reasons for consulting Sweden were mainly because of the dominant personality of Undén,[90] under whom Sweden was playing an active rôle in attempting to develop the machinery of the League. It was from him that the Secretary-General of the League of Nations first heard of the Demir-Kapu incident.[91]

---

[90] For divergence of views on Sweden's attitude towards the League's decision on Aaland Islands which were awarded to Finland on 24 June 1921. See Official Journal, 1921, Special Supplement, No. 1, pp. 4-5.

[91] For text of telegram from Undén to Sir Eric sent from Stockholm on 21 October 1925, see LON Archives, Demande de renseignements télégraphiques a ce sujet, en vue d'examiner les mesures à prendre eventuellement par le Conseil de la S.D.N., File No. 47177.

Part II The Dispute before the League of Nations

Chapter IV The Involvement of the League

The War and peace settlements had a profound, unsettling impact on the lives of the ordinary European citizens. But the subsequent "redistribution of territory" of the vanquished to the victors had created an acute problem of minorities "far larger than any which had been dealt with on previous occasions". [1] Nearly 20 million Europeans found themselves as "minorities" under states, which more often than not they regarded as hostile to them. [2] As the years passed, their problems and conflicts became more and more complex. No wonder the treatment of minorities required the initiation of the first attempts at the creation of an international code of behaviour. Fourteen states, including Greece and Bulgaria, accepted the protection of minorities as an international obligation.

---

[1] President Wilson emphasised that nothing was more likely to "disturb the peace of the world than the treatment which in certain circumstances be meted out to minorities". See extracts of speeches in Temperley, op.cit., Vol. IV, pp. 101-139.

[2] By far the best documented work on this question is The Problems of Minorities (A collection of several essays by W. Rappard, H.W. Harris, R.L. Buell and others), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1926. See also a Resolution adopted by the Council at London on 16 June 1920. Official Journal, Annex 65, p. 57, and memo of the Secretary-General, which contains draft letter to the Greek government, adopted by the Council on 22 February 1921. Council Minutes, Twelfth Session, Official Journal, 1921, Annex 153, 153 a and 153 b, pp. 63-65.

In view of the importance of this problem for Greece and Bulgaria and of the involvement of the League in handling it, the problem of minorities and the settlement of refugees forms an important chain leading to the Demir-Kapu incident.

1. The Problem of Minorities

During the first few years, the League of Nations became deeply involved in the task of implementation of minority treaties.[3] The representatives of several governments came before the Assembly to show how just, how liberal or how generous were their intentions, their institutions and their policy with respect to their minorities[4]. The Council of the League passed a score of resolutions on this question. But the minorities continued to create complicated political and legal problems which were not clearly envisaged earlier. The reason why the execution of minority provisions was transferred from the Great Powers to the League was a simple one. The small powers, which in this case were the ones most affected by the treaties, had

---

3 For statistical and other details see P. de Azcárate, League of Nations and National Minorities: an experiment. Washington, 1945, pp. 123-130. Also Council Minutes, Tenth Session, Official Journal, 1920, Annex 115, p. 143.

4 The League could not enforce these provisions because of the "delicate political balance in the Assembly".

little confidence in the intervention of the Great Powers [5] and they therefore wanted an international agency, like the League, to handle the matter.

According to the resolution of the Council, the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly relevant to minorities were the concern of the League [5a]. The text of the resolution reads: "The Council of the LON resolves that the stipulations of Articles 49-56 of the treaty of peace between Associated and Allied Powers and Bulgaria ... So far as they affect persons belonging to racial, religious or linguistic minorities be hereby placed under the guarantee of the League" [6].

The provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly attempted to regulate the safety of minorities; Article 57 stipulated specifically that "in case of difference of opinion as

---

5 For details see Temperley, op.cit., Vol. V, pp. 120-125. Also H.G. Alexander, The League of Nations and the Operation of Minority Treaties, London, 1926.

5a The Minority Treaties signed by Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were ratified and placed under the guarantee of the League. The principle treaties relevant to the Greek and Bulgarian Minorities are contained in LON, Treaty concerning the Protection of Minorities in Greece, signed at Sèvres, 10 August 1920, Treaty Series No. 711 1924, Volume 28, pp. 245-265 and LON, Proposal relating to the protection of Bulgarian Minorities in Greece, 29 September 1924, Treaty Series No. 737 1924, Volume 29, pp. 125-127. Greece alone did not ratify them on the grounds that the treaties are "anti-juridique". See the speech of Greek's representative, N. Politis, in LON, Document (C.408. N.250, 1922, I).

6 Treaty of Neuilly, op.cit.

to the question of law or fact with any power, the dispute shall be referred to the Permanent Court."[7]

The minorities living in Bulgaria at the time included Jews, Turks, Armenians, Greeks and Tatars. Estimates of the number of each minority group differ. Whatever the exact number, it was obviously a large one. According to one source about one-fifth of the population of Bulgaria were minorities, while another puts it at one-third of the total.[8] As a result of war with Turkey, Greece had an equally formidable problem with refugees.

The confusion created by the treaty provisions in an already unstable position was immense.[9]

---

[7] Ibid.

[8] For other estimates, see A. Girard, Les Minorités nationales, ethniques et réligieuses en Bulgarie. Paris, 1933 and G.P. Ghenoff, Bulgaria and the Balkan Problems, published by the Bulgarian National Group for the Balkan Conference with the assistance of Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (Pamphlets on Bulgaria), Sofia, 1934, Vol. 2, No. 15, pp. 5-6.

[9] The following extract from one of the documents submitted to the League reveals the unsatisfactory conditions of the minorities: "L'oeuvre de Neuilly pour le peuple bulgare a été une catastrophe nationale complète. Pour les minorités bulgares c'est un asservissement pire que celui des Turcs. Après 50 ans de luttes, de révolte et des révolutions sanglantes, de bannissement ... la chaîne de ses malheurs s'alourdit...". LON Pamphlets, Les droits des Minorités Bulgares, No. 8 (undated), p. 34. For the condition of minorities, see La Macédoine sans la domination serbe et les droits des minorités, Sofia, 1926, No. 9.

According to another note, received from the Bulgarian delegation to the League, the treatment of Bulgarians under Greek rule was described thus: "... One of the first steps taken by the Greek authorities after the occupation of the country was to oblige the Bulgarians who had remained in Thrace to sign declarations equal to open profession of their Hellenic feelings."[10]

In fulfilment of Article 56 of the Treaty of Neuilly, a convention had already been concluded between Greece and Bulgaria on 27 November, 1919, "to regulate the reciprocal and voluntary emigration between Greece and Bulgaria of racial, religious and linguistic minorities".[11] Its purpose was to facilitate the

---

10 LON Pamphlets, Memorandum, Bulgarian Minorities in Greece, September 1922. Document (23205), p.5.

11 The Treaty came into force on 9 August 1920. See Council minutes, The Intermigration Agreement between Greece and Bulgaria, 9th session, private meeting, Paris, 1920, (16 - 20 September), Official Journal, 1920, p.5, and the comment of Caclamanos, the Greek representative, to the effect that the treaty was intended to eliminate constant sources of friction.

emigration of Bulgarians domiciled in Greece and Greeks domiciled in Bulgaria. The convention provided for the formation of a Mixed Commission of four members - one each from Greece and Bulgaria, and two appointed by the Council of the League of Nations.[12] The definition of a minority, as adopted in the convention, was as follows: "a population whose members are subjects of a state who differ in race, language or religion[13] from the majority of the subjects". The definition also included former Greek and Bulgarian minorities in territories in Turkey which had passed from Turkey to Bulgaria and Greece.[14] This definition brought under

---

12 For Resolution and Report, ibid., Annex 107, pp.119-121.

13 In Bulgaria, the principle of nationality was based on "jus soli" and "jus sanguinis". LON Archives, The Bulgarian Constitution, (1879) amended 1893, Document (2736). However liberty of religion was granted to all citizens by Articles 40 and 41 of the Constitution.

14 On this point the Commission stated: "... nous croyons heureuse la volonté du gouvernement Bulgare de recourir à une enquête de la Commission Mixte au moment où la presse hellénique témoigne à nouveau d'une contagieuse émotion relativement au sort de la minorité grecque en Bulgarie ... la polémique engagée provoque à nouveau une réelle excitation de l'opinion publique dans les deux pays". LON, Archives, Documents communicated by the Greco-Bulgar Mixed Commission. File No. 48135. For details on the origin of the Commission, S.P. Ladas, The Exchange of Minorities, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, New York, 1932, p. 51.

its coverage people who could not be easily classified, and thus enlarged the scope for tension.

As a result, the Bulgarian minority of Greece, who spoke Bulgarian and belonged to the Exarchist Church, became Greek subjects. In this category were also included Bulgarians who spoke Macedonian and who originally came from Salonika and from south and east Macedonia.[15] The picture in Greece was only slightly different. There were several religious communities which had fled from Greece before and during the Balkan Wars and which had established themselves at Adrianople.

This definition not only left out certain minorities like Greek-speaking Bulgarians, or Bulgarian-speaking Greeks, but it also raised a number of complicated legal and political questions regarding its interpretation. How far was the Convention retroactive ? Should its provisions cover up to 1906, 1912 or 1913 ? These were to be subjects of continuing disputes between the countries concerned.

Another protocol to cover up the earlier loopholes on minorities was signed on 29 September, 1924,[16] whereby the governments of Greece and Bulgaria agreed to act as an advisory body for Greek minority questions in

---

15 The frontiers had been closed in this area since the Balkan Wars.

16 LON, Treaty Series, XXIX, pp. 117 and 123. The protocol was later rejected by the Greek National Assembly.

Bulgaria and for Bulgarian minority questions in Greece.[17] Under the Minorities Protocol, a Mixed Commission on Greco-Bulgarian Migration was established with its Headquarters at Constantinople.[18] It main task was to liquidate Property of emigrants, settling migrants who had walked across empty-handed and assessing claims arising out of real property. In the process of settling all these claims, the members of the Commission encountered endless difficulties.

The Bulgarian Government urged that an effort be made to establish the truth concerning the allegations of the Greek press on Greek minorities, and that both sides be given the opportunity to present their versions to the Commission. The Greek thesis was that the Mixed Commission had "no competence" to deal with those emigrants who had decided to leave Bulgaria before 31 December 1924.[19]

The Report presented by the Mixed Commission on 2 March, 1925, summarises the intricate problems of

---

17 The Council adopted another resolution proposed by Briand to note the 9th Report of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission on March 16, 1926, Council Minutes, Extraordinary Meeting, Thirty-eighth session, Official Journal, April 1926, p. 505.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

of settling questions of nationality. It states that " ... it is no common thing to find candidates for emigration who have served successively in the Turkish, Bulgarian and Greek armies and speak two languages equally fluently and possess three passports or none at all. [20] The main reason of the ineffectivity of the Commission's work, according to the Report, lay in the political attitudes of the two governments. "... The Bulgarian government renounces publicly the rights granted to it by the Treaty of Minorities and the Greek government exaggerates the danger of tension at the frontier". [21]

Another important provision in the Treaty of Neuilly, contained in para. 4 of Article 56, subjected the property of Bulgarian nationals in an allied country to a procedure whereby it could be charged as payment of certain claims due to the nationals of an allied country. These claims originated from certain acts committed by the Bulgarian government during the wars.

An arbitrator [22] had to be appointed to assess the claims between Bulgaria and an allied country. Greece,

---

[20] Letter of the President of the Mixed Commission to the Conference of Ambassadors, ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Albert Wuarin was appointed as the arbitrator. For details, see M.O. Hudson, The Work of the PCIJ during its First Three Years, World Peace Foundation Pamphlets, Vol. VIII, No. 7, Boston, 1925, pp. 363-365.

as one of the allied countries, submitted its claims to an arbitrator whose competence was challenged by the Bulgarian Government. After several years of correspondence, the dispute was submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice. [23]

---

[23] Discussed in more detail in Chapter VIII(c).

2. The Settlement of Refugees

While the status of minorities was being subjected to legal intricacies, the number of refugees continued to increase in both Greece and Bulgaria, thus adding a visibly disturbing factor in their politics. To trace the cause of this disturbance we must turn back to 1921.

In 1921, the Bulgarian government had written to the Conference of Ambassadors [25] complaining that the residents of Western Thrace, which was under the sovereignty of Greece by virtue of the Treaty of Neuilly, were being enrolled in the Greek Army. The Bulgarian government, on the other hand, was accused by the Greek authorities of encouraging the formation of armed bands and their forays deep into the frontier areas of Greece, Rumania and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Bulgaria proposed an international commission of enquiry in the form of a Mixed Commission or a Commission of Enquiry, repeating its proposals of 9 June 1922 [26].

Stambuliisky, the Prime Minister of Bulgaria, had already underlined the difficulties of preventing the refugees from indulging in violence. His statement was

---

25 See Memorandum by the Secretary-General submitted to the Council on 19 April 1923, Annex 494(a) in LON Archives, in Appeals and Complaints Addressed to the Commission, File No. 48132. Also P.S. Ladas, The Exchange of Minorities, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, Bureau of International Research, Harvard University, New York, 1932.

26 For the text of the letter, see Council Minutes, Nineteenth Session, Official Journal, August 1922, p. 795.

communicated to the League without comment. It read: "In consequence of the Treaties of Peace, 2,000,000 Bulgarians have been left outside the boundaries of the Bulgarian State. Of these, 500,000 are refugees in Bulgaria and many of them have taken to brigandage. Prevented from living in a lawful manner with their kinsmen, they form themselves into small groups and pass continually from one side of the frontier to the other. This frequently gives rise to disputes with the neighbouring states. Although the Bulgarian government has taken extremely stringent measures against the disturbance of the peace, it has found it absolutely impossible to prevent these numerous refugees from entering the territory of neighbouring states ..." [27].

The fact that the situation on the border territories was dangerous and could erupt into violence at any time was brought to the attention of the Conference of Ambassadors at Genoa [28]. The Prime Minister of Bulgaria, again writing in May 1922, described the hardships incurred by the Bulgarian refugees and made the following proposals: [29]

---

[27] Document (C.443(1), M.293, 1922, I) and ibid., Annex 382, p. 921.

[28] Ibid., pp. 921-922. This letter was communicated to the President of the Council of the League of Nations by Mr. Schanzer, the Italian Foreign Minister, on 24 May , 1922. Text in LON. Document (C. 408, M. 250, 1922, I).

[29] See text of Resolution adopted by the Mixed Bulgarian-Serb-Croat-Slovene Commission in which it was decided to propose the question of amnesty to the Crown. Council Minutes, Twenty-fourth session, Official Journal, July 1923, p. 724.

" - that the Balkan States should declare an amnesty allowing these refugees to return to their homes;
- that their abandoned property should be restored;
- that the clauses in the Treaty of Peace which safeguard the rights of minorities should be enforced as soon as possible ".

These proposals were, however, considered to be too "general"; and the Council asked the Secretary-General to advise the Bulgarian government to submit the information in the form of a petition "in regard to the protection of minorities". [30]

The Bulgarian complaint regarding the enrolment of Bulgarians into the Greek Army was taken up by the President of the Conference of Ambassadors, Cambon, in his letter to the Greek Chargé d'Affairs in Paris. The letter reminded Greece that as Article 48 of the Treaty of Neuilly has not come into force, "the legal situation ..... is not in any way changed. Under these circumstances the Allied Powers cannot recognise the action of the Greek government conducting - contrary to the most elementary principles of international law - a recruiting campaign in the territories placed under their sovereignty". [31] The Conference requested the Greek government to desist from enrolling inhabitants of Thrace into the Greek Army and to stop

---

30 Ibid.

31 LON, Document (C. 443 (1), M. 293, 1922, I) and Official Journal, July 1923, p. 921.

removals of their effects. [32]

The Greek government took a few months to reply to this communication. On 1 November 1922, Politis, writing from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Athens, commented on the second point: "... my enquiry shows that as the result of an obvious misinterpretation of certain instructions given by the government, the removals referred to had in fact begun, but that as soon as the matter was brought to the notice of the higher authorities in the province, they took measures not merely to put a stop to such removals, but to enable the ejected families to return to their homes". [33]

In reply to the proposals of the Bulgarian government of 9 June, 1922, to institute an international enquiry into the border incidents, the governments of Greece, Rumania and Yugoslavia addressed a collective note to the Bulgarian government on 14 June, in which their earlier accusation was repeated. The Bulgarian government took offence at this note, which it regarded of a "threatening character".

---

[32] These "removals" referred to the inhabitants of certain villages in Dedeagatch (Alexandroupolis) area where the Bulgarians alleged the Greek army had begun recruitment.

[33] Letters from Politis to the Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires at Athens, "Bulgarian inhabitants of Western Thrace", Council Minutes, Twenty-fourth session, Official Journal, June, July and August 1923, Annex 494 b, pp. 643-4, 764-797 and 804, and Document (C. 246. 1923. VII).

It considered itself to be unjustly blamed for responsibility in the formation of these violent bands. It therefore appealed to the Council of the League under Article II (para. 2) of the Covenant, that the collective note was a circumstance "likely to affect good international relations".

The Collective note was drafted by the Rumanian government who alleged that the incursions of armed bands was a serious affair and that Bulgaria must immediately take action to secure its immediate cessation. To quote from the text: "... We have been requested by the governments of Greece and ofthe Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to take strong measures with the Bulgarian government to secure immediate cessation of the existing state of affairs. The assurances, however, given at Genoa to Bratiano by Stambuliisky have caused us to endeavour to obtain a postponement of such measures and to institute a method of procedure by which the Rumanian government draws the attention of the Bulgarian government to the nature and consequence of such a situation ...".

The Bulgarian appeal came before the Council at its nineteenth session in August 1922 at which the representatives of all the four countries were present. [34] Extracts from the statements of the representatives of all four countries are given below to indicate the nature of the problem of refugees; the inability of Bulgaria, Greece and the Council to take any firm action is inherent in the

---

34 Ibid. The discussion in the following paragraphs is based mainly on these sources.

complexity of the problem.

The Bulgarian representative stated that his government had "loyally endeavoured to carry out the terms of the Treaty of Peace, even where it involved the most serious sacrifices ... Bulgaria has been subjected to a fierce campaign of suspicion and misrepresentation ...". He gave the Council the reason why his government considered 'the situation of exceptional gravity' and 'felt that it could neither leave its country exposed to the danger of such a threat nor accept before the world the blame for complications which it had endeavoured by all means to avoid". Bulgaria expressed its preference for the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry by the Council rather than for "mixed commissions, which provide a momentary respite, but they could not altogether solve the problem". According to Bulgaria, only a Commission of Enquiry appointed by the League "would have the impartiality or the competence and authority necessary for a task so difficult and so important for the peace of a part of Europe".

From the statements of the representatives of Greece, Yugoslavia and Rumania, it is evident that they did not desire the intervention of the League and wished to prevent any action by the Council. All the three countries, who were signatories to this collective note, presented their points of view in their statements during the discussion. The Rumanian delegate, speaking on behalf of the three, said: "The question before the Council was: did this note threaten to cause a breach of the peace ?".

Rumania did not consider it necessary to discuss the existence or origin of the armed bands, which was in fact the basic question. All the three countries, other than

Bulgaria, were not as plagued with refugees nor was their existence such a grave menance to their political life. It is interesting to note that the Rumanian delegate quoted from a letter of Stambuliisky, the Prime Minister of Bulgaria, to support his own statement. This letter indicated that 500,000 Bulgarians who remained "outside the limits of the state" had taken refuge in Bulgaria. The reasons for their unrest and revolutionary activities was given as follows:
"Endowed with a live national consciousness, brought up in the free and idyllic life of the "Comitadjis", among the mountains and the ravines, ... and passionately attached to their homes and families ... take refuge in the forests and form themselves into small bands which continually cross and recross the frontiers, causing affrays with the authorities and troubling peace and social order both in our country and amongst our neighbours".

The Rumanian delegate added that the Kingdom of the Serbs-Croats and Slovenes had already accepted in principle not only the suggestion of a mixed commission, but also a "common plan of action" to be prepared by the military and administrative authorities. Therefore, he concluded that "the intervention of the League of Nations would appear to be useless and inopportune".

The Yugoslav representative, Boshkovitch, also thought that "no reason existed for invoking Article II of the Covenant which under the circumstances could not be applied. He accused the Bulgarian government of making statement contradictory to its obligations to the Treaty of Neuilly. He said that Bulgaria had allowed the Serbian emigrants to remain in the frontier zone, to equip

themselves with arms, to form themselves into organised bands and to pass freely across the frontier, in order to commit acts of brigandage and vengeance on Serbian territory". Apparently among these emigrants were certain criminals whose extradition had been demanded by Serbia. The Serb-Croat-Slovene representative ended his intervention by saying that the solution of the problem lay in direct and pacific methods.

At this session the representative of Greece made a very short statement in which he attempted to show the desire of Greece for peace at the time when "she was carrying on alone in Asia Minor the struggle which the Great War had left to her for the defence of free Christian populations. No one could seriously propose that she would look for an excuse for a rupture which would open up a fresh war front on her European territory". In his view, the collective note was "not of a nature as to affect international relations".

There appeared to be some confusion among delegates as to their attitude concerning the appointment of a Mixed Commission or a Commission of Enquiry. The general tone of the discussion, however, was soft. The intervention of the members not party to the dispute aimed at finding some sort of face-saving device formula. [35]

The discussion adjourned pending a report, which was presented the next day by the Rapporteur, Viscount Ishii. Summing up the debate he stated that the collective note excluded any possibility of conflict in violation of the

---

[35] Official Journal, August 1922, p. 797.

Covenant of the League of Nations. He concluded that the three countries had accepted Bulgarian proposals to negotiate directly under certain conditions. During these negotiations, therefore, the Council of the League could only seek "formal assurances" from all the four as a "guarantee against the possibility of conflict".

After a few modifications, the Council adopted a resolution which was much milder in tone than the collective note of the three. It read: "After having heard the explanations ... the step taken by their (the three) governments was in no way unfriendly ... and in view of the fact that direct conversations as to the means of putting an end ... are at present proceeding ... the Council ... expresses its hope for a satisfactory conclusion to the efforts made by the interested governments to put an end, by a direct agreement, to a situation which may become dangerous to peace ... and requests the governments to inform the council of the results of the negotiations in progress ... " [36]

As a result of this resolution, a special Mixed Commission was established between Bulgaria and the Serb-Croat-Slovene state, but not between Bulgaria and Greece and Bulgaria and Rumania. It was composed of representatives of both countries from the Army General Staff, officers commanding the frontier guards and heads of the police. [37] The Commission met between 3 and 17 March 1923 at Nish. It investigated the question of frontier supervision and found it insufficient, and decided to

---

[36] Ibid., p. 804.

[37] Ibid.

increase the strength of the frontier guards particularly in the Seravino to Tumbia sector. It decided to have the frontier-zone petrolled freely and allow the utilisation of wells, fountains, etc. by the guards of both states. The growing of crops, which could shield unlawful activities, was forbidden, and the landowners were granted certain privileges with regard to their property. The extradition of criminals was arranged, and it was agreed that "all individuals belonging to a Macedonian revolutionary organisation or assisting such an organisation in any manner involving the responsibility of the state shall be brought before the criminal courts".

But the problem between Greece and Bulgaria, the contenders, remained where it was. A year after the above resolution, the Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires accredited to the League of Nations, Minkoff, again appealed to the League concerning the activities of the Greek authorities in Western Thrace. [38] It may be recalled here that the legal status of this territory and its inhabitants was still undecided. He stated that since the total withdrawal of foreign control, Western Thrace had become the scene of very serious incidents. [39] The Bulgarian

---

38 Letter from the Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires in Berne to the Secretary-General of the League submitted to the Council on 19 April, 1923. "Bulgarian Inhabitants of Western Thrace", Council Minutes, Twenty-fourth session, Official Journal, August 1922, Annex 494, pp. 642-643, and Document (C. 246, 1923, VII)

39 As a result of the war with Turkey, Greece had an equally formidable problem with refugees from Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor.

government further alleged that the inhabitants of whole villages were put on board ships and deported to the islands of the archipelago; about 1500 Bulgarian peasants were put on shore in Crete. This move was designed to repopulate Western Thrace with Greek refugees from Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor and "to alter the ethnical character of the country". [40]

The Greek army had stationed regular troops near Maritsa with the result that refugees streamed into Bulgaria bringing with them a tale of misery and swelling the huge number of fugitives. The support of these refugees naturally placed an additional financial burden on Bulgaria. The Bulgarian government requested the League to put an end to the state of affairs, reinstate deportees, return refugees and restore confiscated property. [41]

---

40 Letter from Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires at Berne to the League, op.cit.

41 The Turkish settlers who came from Greece in 1922 from Smyrna and surrounding areas were settled in Macedonia. Their total number was approximately one and a half million. Also see discussion in the Twenty-seventh session of the Council held at Paris from 10 to 20 December, 1923, Official Journal, February, 1924, p. 324.

The problem of refugees faced by Greece, on the other hand, was on a different scale. A problem of enormous magnitude had arisen from the Greco-Turkish Convention [42] for the exchange of populations. Another Refugee Settlement Commission [43] was established by the Geneva Protocol on 29 September 1923. It consisted of two Greek members appointed by the Greek government and two appointed by the League, to settle the problem of one million refugees. The Commission had at its disposal one million pounds sterling, and it requested the League for six to eight million more in order to approach a solution for a problem of such magnitude. The Chairman of the Refugee Commission at the time, Morgenthau, asked the Council to appoint a Committee to raise the necessary loan. Britain made an advance of one million pounds sterling to Greece in 1923 and again in 1924 [44]. There were several organisations

---

[42] See the statement of the Chairman of the Refugee Settlement Commission, Morgenthau, at the Thirty-eighth session of the Council, 15 March 1924. Official Journal, April 1924, pp. 508-510.

[43] LON, Treatry of Sèvres between Greece and the Allies, Treaty Series, 1923, No. III.

[44] Ibid. The Greek Sub-Committee met in London on 7 May 1924. It was composed of Britain, France, Italy and Greece and Chairman of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission and Governor of the Bank of Greece, Council Minutes, Twenty-ninth session, Official Journal, July 1924, Annex 639, pp. 982-983.

working for the relief and welfare of these refugees in contrast to Bulgaria.[45] With this financial aid, the Greek government resettled refugees from Smyrna and surrounding areas.[46] Within a short period, they begun to cultivate cotton, wheat and wine. Slowly, the region became one of the richest agricultural areas, which Greece was reluctant to part with.

The significant point however was that the areas in which the Greek refugees from Turkey were resettled were those from which the Bulgarians had been displaced.

---

45 Ibid., pp. 911-912.

46 See Report of the High Commission on Near East Refugees, submitted to the Council on 11 March, 1924, Council Minutes, Twenty-eighth session, Official Journal, April,1924, Annex 610(a) pp. 591-594.

CHAPTER V

THE "EXTRAORDINARY SESSION" OF THE COUNCIL

In 1925, Europe was in a pacific mood. The Locarno Treaties were signed and were considered a turning point in the history of Europe [1]. They were supposed to usher in a new phase in peaceful relations between the Great Powers, and like the Versailles Peace Treaties, would it was thought, solve the European problem of security. And so when three days after the signing of the treaties the shooting began in Demir-Kapu between Greece and Bulgaria, it was not surprising to find the New York Times writing its editorial in an optimistic vein. It said that the Greco-Bulgarian incident was "only one of the frequent border troubles ... This was unlikely to involve any of the principal European nations ... In London it was considered to be an ugly contrast to a peaceful outlook just presented by the Locarno agreements" [2].

In a speech on 9 November 1926 at the Guildhall, Austen Chamberlain said: "Locarno was not the end, but the beginning" [3]. Aristide Briand, during the discussion of Locarno Treaties in the French Chamber des députés on 25 February 1926, said: "Mais, pour bien le juger, cette acte, il faut d'abord se poser deux questions: avant Locarno,

---

1 See the Preface in J.T. Shotwell, Locarno and the Balkans; a turning-point in history, International Conciliation, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 1927, No.229. Also J.T. Shotwell and M. Salvin, Lessons on Security and Disarmament From the History of the League of Nations. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York, 1949, pp. 27-30.

2 The editorial was headlined "Washington not concerned", The New York Times, New York, 22 October 1925.

3 A.Chamberlain, Peace in our Time, London, 1928, p.83.

qu'avions-nous ? et, s'il n'y avait pas eu Locarno, qu'aurions-nous ? ..." [4] .

1. The Extraordinary Session

The telegram sent by the Bulgarian Government on 22 October 1925 to the League of Nations invoked Articles 10 and 11 of the League Covenant [5] . The text of the telegram reads: "... in virtue of Articles 10 and 11 of the Covenant, the Bulgarian Government requests you to convene the Council without delay to take necessary steps ...". This telegram was received in Geneva by Sir Eric Drummond, the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, on the morning of 23 October 1925. It was in virtue of the provisions of the Covenant that the Council of the League convened an Extraordinary Session [6] to take the steps indicated.

The emergency session of the Council of the League held five public meetings at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris from 26 to 31 October 1925. It was the first time in the history of the League that a member-state had made an urgent appeal 'to convene the council without delay to take the necessary steps'. Exactly a week after the shooting and within fifty hours of the receipt of the telegram from the Bulgarian government, the Council began its deliberations concerning the conflict. The speed and efficiency with which the

---

4 Speech reproduced in A. Elisha, Aristide Briand: discours et écrits de politique étrangère, Paris, 1965, p. 156.

5 The telegram was read out at the first public meeting on 26 October 1925. For text, see Official Journal, Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Extraordinary session of the Council, November 1925, p. 1696 and Document (608.M.225.1925. VII).

6 Ibid., pp. 1695-1720.

Council members answered the summons has been regarded as a remarkable achievement of the League [7].

Letters and telegrams began to arrive from all parts of the world, [8] in particular from South America where frontier incidents were the rule of the day. Eleven countries acknowledged the summons of the League post-haste [9]. As was to be expected, the first news came from Bulgaria, through its Embassy in Berne, proposing the names of their representatives at the Session: Papazov and Theodoroff [10]. The Greek Government nominated Colonel Vlachopoulos and Alexandros Carapanos as its representatives, the latter was the Greek Minister in Paris. The reply of the Greek Government came later, a day before the opening of the Extraordinary Session.[10a]

---

7 The representatives of the Council were: Belgium, Paul Hymans; United Kingdom, Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain; Czechoslovakia, Eduard Benés; Italy, Vittoria Scialoja; Spain, Quinones de Leon; Sweden, Östen Unden; Uruguay, Cuani. The President at the time was Paul Painlevé. Aristide Briand was one of the substitutes with Paul Boncourand Loucheur.

8 LON Archives, Arrangements for an Extraordinary Session of the Council on 26 October 1925. File No. 47292.

9 They were: Argentina, Panama, Bolivia, Haiti, Uruguay, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Peru, San Salvador, Guatemala, Cuba and Honduras.

10 Papazov had acquired considerable experience in arbitration matters and had been a member of the Greco-Bulgarian Mixed Commission, Theodoroff was on the staff of the Bulgarian Embassy at Berne.

10a Telegram from Hadjikyriakos to Sir Eric, Athens, dated 24 October 1925. Document (B.6. M.215. 1925).

What is significant about these communications is that almost all accepted the interventions of the League and some even congratulated the Council for its speed [11]. The positions of the Bulgarian and Greek governments were set out in official replies [12] signed by the Foreign Ministers.

The Bulgarian Foreign Minister, Kalfoff, wrote to Sir Eric Drummond: "I hasten to express the deep gratitude of the Bulgarian Government for the speed with which the Council and the Secretariat have taken action. Although Bulgarian troops at no time entered Greek territory, fresh instructions have been given at once in accordance with your Excellency's recommendations ... Unfortunately, I have to inform you that the Greek troops are still on Bulgarian territory and at the present moment their artillery is continuing to bombard the 'open town' of Petritch ...".

Admiral Hadjikyriakos, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, put forward the viewpoint of his country thus: " ... The sudden and unprovoked character of the Bulgarian aggression is obvious ... The Greek government faced by an intolerable attitude, has had to allow its military command to take all measures considered necessary for the defence and if necessary the clearance of the national

---

11 LON Archives, Arrangements for an Extraordinary Session, File No. 47292. Östen Undén, the representative of Sweden came to this meeting of the Council by aeroplane from Stockholm to Paris. In describing this session of the Council, no writer has omitted to mention this fact. Considering the fact that in 1925 air travel was a rare phenomenon, it was understandable that this should figure as an important fact in the mind of the contemporary writers. Air traffic in the Balkans in 1926 linked the following cities: Budapest, Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest and Constaninople.

12 The Bulgarian and Greek telegrams were dated 24 and 25 October 1925 respectively. ibid.

territory, certain points of which are at this moment still occupied by Bulgarian regular troops".

The telegram of the Greek government further emphasised: "... all the measures which the military command has been compelled to take are measures of legitimate defense and could not be considered hostile acts likely to lead to a rupture in accordance with Article 12 of the Covenant".

There appears to be some controversy among writers as to who, Briand or Sir Eric Drummond, convened the Emergency Session of the Council [13]. In view of the importance of the procedure adopted, we must look at this question in some detail. According to paragraph 1, Article 11 of the Covenant, the request to summon in an emergency an immediate meeting of the Council "shall be made to the Secretary-General by any member of the League". In a recent study on the United Nations, Andrew Boyd refers to "a recurrent legend that he (the Secretary-General) summoned the Council himself in 1925 to secure a cease-fire"[14].

What were the rules of procedure as laid down in the Covenant ?. The relevant rule of procedure concerning emergency sessions [15] is stated in Article 1: "... the Council shall be convened by the President by means of a letter addressed by the Secretary-General to the regularly accredited

---

13 Prof. W. Rappard suggested that the Council was summoned by the Secretary-General in Uniting Europe: the trend of international co-operation since the war, New-Haven 1930, p.280; while P. Rémond asserted that the "Secretary-General with Briand" convened the meeting, in Le règlement pacifique des conflits internationaux par la Société des Nations (1920-1926), Paris, 1927, p. 159.

14 Andrew Boyd, United Nations, Piety, Myth and Truth, London, 1962, p. 88.

15 During various discussions on the Rules of Procedure held at the Second, Fifth and Twelfth Sessions of the League, it was unanimously decided that in "sudden emergencies" the Secretary-General summoning the Council should act in consultation with the President. See Rules of Procedure of the Council Resolved at the Meeting of the Council in Rome on 17 May 1920. Document (20/31/39A) and Report of the Committee on Council Procedure, adopted by the Council on 29 September 1937, Official Journal, December 1937, pp. 1167-1170.

representative of each government ...". Paragraph 3 of Article 1 reads: "The Council must meet, at the request of any Member of the League of Nations (if necessary, in extraordinary session), in the circumstances referred to in Articles 11, 15 and 17 of the Covenant". But paragraph 4 of Article 1 states that if not fixed by the Council, "the date of the opening of an Extraordinary session shall be fixed by the President, if possible after consultation with his colleagues".

Taking into consideration these rules, let us now turn to what in fact happened.

According to the files [16] of the Political Section of the League, the procedure which was followed was in this order. The telegrams to Greece and Bulgaria on summoning the meeting were drafted by Sir Eric Drummond [17] in Geneva; Aristide Briand, the acting President [18] happened to be in Paris at the time. The draft telegram, which originated in the Secretariat, began with a note saying that: "Le Secrétaire-Général demande au Président du Conseil l'authorisation d'envoyer aux deux gouvernements ...". The text of the telegram which went to both the Greek and the Bulgarian Governments in the name of Briand was corrected in the handwriting of Sir Eric. A new file was then opened with a red label marked 'action copy',which was circulated from the political

---

16 LON Archives, Arrangements for an Extraordinary session, File No. 47300.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

section to the Administration office, to the Information section and then on to the Legal Section of the League Secretariat.[19]

---

[19] The final version of the telegram sent on 23 October to all the members under Briand's name begins: "Le Secrétaire Général, agissant en vertu de l'article 11 a convoqué le Conseil en session spéciale pour lundi prochain à Paris stop en qualité de Président du Conseil en exercise je l'ai prie de transmettre le message suivant aux Gouvernements Grec et Bulgare".

It is quite possible that the Secretary-General of the League obtained the consent of the acting President on the telephone; but there is no record of this conversation, or any other clear indication to this effect. From the reading of draft notes and the telegrams in the Archives, it is not possible to surmise in what form the President gave his consent and whether the date of the meeting was actually fixed by him. It must therefore be assumed that Sir Eric was mainly responsible for the preparation of the meeting, and that at some point in this process Briand endorsed these arrangements verbally.

Texts of draft note and telegram with corrections in cyclostyled copy, LON Archives. Arrangements for Extraordinary Session. File No. 47292.

2. Debates and Personal Diplomacy

The words of the League telegram were clear as they emphasised that no further action ought to be taken by the two parties which might aggravate the conflict [20]. The Greek and Bulgarian governments likewise lost no time in making known to the Council their own versions of the frontier incident. Each government accused the other of the violation of its territory. The first priority, therefore, seemed to be to take measures that would immediately send troops to their respective frontiers.

It may be noted that on the day the League Council began its consideration of the dispute, the Greek troops had already advanced to Petritch after bombing the railway station at Manipole and caused, according to Bulgarian sources, considerable damage to persons and property [21].

The President, Aristide Briand, opened the meeting on 26 October, 1925, by reading the telegram sent earlier and reminding the Greek and Bulgarian governments of their obligations under the Covenant and "invited" [22] them to withdraw their troops. " ... I know my colleagues would wish me to remind the two governments of solemn obligations under

---

20 See for example Le Temps, The Times, New York Times and Journal de Genève, 26 October, 1925.

21 LON Archives, Telegram from Kalfoff to Sir Eric, Sofia, dated 22 October 1925. File No. 47301. In this telegram, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kalfoff, also named Marfoff, Bulgaria's Minister in Paris as their special representative (in addition to Papazov and Theodoroff). See Document (C. 633. M.212. 1925).

22 This telegram from Aristide Briand has been variously interpreted to mean "exhortation", "invitation", "request" and "reminder" to both governments. See for example, Shotwell and Salvin, op.cit., p. 59 and J. I. Knudson, op.cit., P.81.

Article 12 of the Covenant not to resort to war. I therefore exhort the two governments to give immediate instructions that, pending consideration of the dispute by the Council, not only further military movements shall not be undertaken but the troops shall at once retire behind their respective frontiers" [23].

President Briand then summarised the position of the Greek and Bulgarian governments contained in their replies to the Council. He said: "The Bulgarian Government ... had stated that it had ordered its troops not to resist invasion by force. The Greek government said that as soon as we are able to re-occupy our posts and free the whole of our territory, our troops will withdraw on to our frontier lines" [24]. He was very direct in posing the questions to the representatives of the Greek and Bulgarian governments: "What action is being taken on the recommendation of the Council with regard to the cessation of hostilities, and withdrawal of troops, and what is the present position ?" [25] .

---

23 For text see LON Archives, Texte du Télégramme envoyé aux Gouvernements grec et bulgare après le réunion du Conseil, 26 October 1925.

24 The texts of both these telegrams are in LON, Document (C.633. M.212. 1925).

25 LON Archives, Report by the President of the Council, Appeal by the Bulgarian Government under Articles 10 and 11 of the Covenant. Document (C. 662. 1925).

When the Bulgarian representative, Marfoff, rose to speak, he had a lengthy document concerning the frontier incident, but Briand interrupted him by saying that the Council would not listen to a statement of facts at that stage. The discussion was then limited to the actual measures taken by both governments to stop the incident. Marfoff said that his government was ready to submit to any enquiry to show that it was not occupying any portion of Greek territory . Carapanos, the Greek delegate, repeated what had been already stated in the telegram from his Minister of Foreign Affairs. He said that the "Greek government agrees without hesitation to comply to the invitation of the President of the Council to evacuate Bulgarian soil as soon as the Bulgarians have quit Greek territory" [26].

Thus there was a clear divergence in the positions taken by the parties to the conflict - the Bulgarians insisting that they were not occupying any portion of Greek territory, and the Greek agreeing to withdraw their troops from the Bulgarian territory - indeed an admission that they had occupied some parts of Bulgaria - but only on the condition that the Bulgarians withdrew from Greek soil.

The President of the Council seemed to have sensed that the divergence of opinions could not be reconciled in public and suggested that the Council should retire into private session. What happened then behind closed doors is extremely interesting from the point of view of personal diplomacy. The proceedings of this meeting are marked "confidential" in the files of the League Archives and the meeting of the

---

26 Ibid.

Council is referred to as "informal". The Council was conversant with the procedures of retiring into private session [27]. Out of the five permanent members of the Council, only Italy, France and Great Britain participated in the discussions. The remaining two, Japan and Spain, gave their general support to the efforts of the President and the Secretariat. From the reading of the Council Minutes, it appears that almost all the members put pressure on Greece to accept the League proposal to withdraw its troops. The Rapporteur of this private meeting was Sir Austen Chamberlain, the representative of Great Britain.[28]

---

27 The system of retiring into private sessions had been introduced in the Aaland case (1921) and then again in Polish-Lithuanian dispute (1923). In both cases it had saved time and the parties arrived at an agreement rapidly. For details of the procedure of retiring into private session after the first public meeting, see para 5, Article 4, Rules of Procedure of the Council of the League, 17 May 1920, Document (C. 661. 1925). See also "The Practice of the Assembly and the Council of the League of Nations". British Year Book of International Affairs, 1933, p. 29. In these meetings neither the public nor the press was admitted. The members of the Council were also accompanied by a smaller number of collaborators.

On this particular Article Briand later commented that it was "perhaps doubtful whether the action of the Council was legally quite regular". On this point see also J. Barros, The Aland Question: its settlement by the League of Nations, Yale University Press, 1968, and Official Journal, May 1923, p. 485.

28 According to the Rules of Procedure, the questions submitted to the Council were examined and reported upon by the representatives of Members neutral to the subject matter. Great Britain was considered to be neutral in this sense. Rules of Procedure of the Council,, op.cit. On 2 February 1923, the experience of the previous three years in handling conflicts have been consolidated into a systematic list of subjects and Rapporteurs. D.P. Myers, op.cit., p. 29.

From this private session, the Council emerged to announce in public the next day the text of an agreed Resolution. The Resolution was approved unanimously in the private session and adopted unanimously in the public session on 26 October 1925. It reads: "The Council is not satisfied that military operations have ceased and that the troops have been withdrawn. It therefore requests the representatives of the two sides to inform it within 24 hours that the Bulgarian and Greek governments have given unconditional orders to their troops to withdraw behind their national frontiers and within 60 hours that all troops have been withdrawn within the national frontiers" [29].

To supervise the withdrawal of these troops, the Council had also proposed in the private meeting that the Italian, British and French Military Attachés who were already in Belgrade serving the Inter-Allied Commission should proceed post-haste to the scene of the incident to make an investigation. There was no opposition to this proposal. The representatives of the two parties to the dispute also accepted the Council's proposal (later appointed by a formal Resolution on 29 October) [29a]. Marloff said that

---

29

The period indicated in the Resolution began to run from the moment the session adjourned. For text, see LON archives, Resolution adopted by the Council of the League on 26 October 1925. (Incident at the Greco-Bulgarian Frontier, Appeal of the Bulgarian Government under Articles 10 and 11 of the Covenant). Document (C.661(1) M.220. 1925. VII), p.1. For the draft resolution with pencil corrections by Sir Eric, see LON Archives, Arrangements for an Extraordinary Session, File No. 47358.

29a

For a detailed discussion Chapter I, p.7.

"his government was ready to comply with the decision", while Carapanos equally assured the Council of his government's intention to comply with its terms.

In presenting the Resolution in the public session, Sir Austen Chamberlain, called attention to the "gravity of the occasion". He emphasised the fact that a frontier incident had arisen between two nations who were members of the League and who had accepted the obligations of the Covenant. He continued: "Such incidents as that which had caused our present meeting have sometimes had very serious consequences in the past, where there was no machinery such as that offered by the League for their peaceful adjustment and for securing justice to both parties, but it would be an intolerable thing - I go as far as to say that it will be an affront to civilisation - if with all the machinery of the League at their disposal and with the good offices of the Council immediately available - as this meeting shows - such incidents should lead to warlike operations instead of being submitted at once for peaceful and amicable adjustment by the countries concerned to the Council, which will always have regard to their honour and to the safety and security of their nations" [30]. Briand was more precise and direct: he stressed the fact that the mere withdrawal

---

30 Official Journal, November 1925, p. 1699.

of troops behind the frontier was not enough. "It is essential that there shall be no firing either with rifles or with guns, which means that the troops withdrawn across the frontier must cease all acts of hostility" [31].

It must be noted that the Council Resolution avoided naming the aggressor or prejudging the issue. Its main purpose appeared to have been to return to the status quo ante in order to continue the consideration of the dispute. The Resolution made three main points: It gave an ultimatum to the Greek and Bulgarian troops to withdraw their troops behind their respective frontiers. It asked the representatives of both parties to "inform the Council that within 60 hours ... at a sitting to be held later (27 and 28 October), all troops have been withdrawn and it declared that unless those terms were complied with within the time-limit, "the resumption of firing will be met with severe punishments". The responsibility, therefore, was fairly and squarely placed on the shoulders of the two respective governments.

---

31 (Italics added) ibid.

The most immediate and significant consequence of the Extraordinary Session of the Council was that the Greek government, while denying any violation of Bulgarian territory agreed to "comply with the invitation of the President of the Council to evacuate Bulgarian soil" [32]. The only indication from the Greek government attempting to justify its action was the note sent to the Secretariat by Dendarmis, from Bern, mentioning that the Rumanian government has proposed that the Bulgarian government should cease occupation of Greek territory [33]. What the Rumanian Foreign Minister, John Duca had in fact conveyed to Athens was the fact that "the Greeks should in the interest of peace avoid disturbing the Balkans and to exercise moderation towards the Bulgars" [34].

The procedure adopted by the Council was considered to be a personal success for its President, Aristide Briand. The representative of Spain spoke for all the members when he said that he was interpreting the opinion of the Council in approving entirely the attitude of the President "... for having without loss of time taken steps to make the voice of

---

32 Official Journal, November 1925, pp. 1714-1715.

33 LON Archives, Telegram from Dendarmis to Sir Eric, conveyed through the Greek Legation, Berne, dated October 1925. File No. 47298.

34 In connection with the attempt of the Rumanian government to solve the dispute during the Extraordinary Session Barros cites Duca's request to the Greek Minister in Bucharest, Constantine Collas. op. cit, p. 72 and pp. 111-113.

the League of Nations heard at once when the dispute arose. The President neither gave the time nor the opportunity to either of the parties to go into details of the incident. Both Marfoff and Carapanos had to be satisfied with brief answers" [35].

The day the Council was being congratulated on the "rapidity with which the resolution to cease hostilities was drafted and accepted", the reports in the press did not indicate the possibility of success. The resolution must have come as a surprise to many. Some of the atmosphere of the previous day is reflected in the press.

"Although the question of atrocities in the Balkans is always a difficult matter to elucidate ... it seems to me that the behaviour of the Greek soldiers in occupied Bulgarian villages has been very bad ... several peasant women made complaints ... must be remembered that there was not enough time for professional agitators ... Bulgarian posts are equipped with infantry ... There is a newly arrived battery of machine-guns ... The present situation is absurd, either Greece and Bulgaria are at war or they are not" [36].

The New York Times saw in the Greek reaction a similar pattern as in the Corfu incident. It suggested that Italy might seize this opportunity of justifying its own action of two years earlier. But it still saw some hope on the issue despite "shelling and sniping", because Greece accepted the competence of the Council. The journal emphasised the League's resolve to impose peace on the Balkans, underlining

---

35 Official Journal, November 1925, p. 1700.

36 The Times, London, 26 October 1925.

that Greece could not easily escape responsibility.[37]

While the Press was speculating about the results of the Council's session, diplomatic efforts to solve the dispute continued behind the scenes. With this objective in view, the Rumanian Minister in Athens, Langa Rascano, had approached the Greek government on the morning of 26 October, just as the session opened in Paris.

3. The Rumanian Intervention

Before the second session of the Council opened in Paris on 27 October 1925, a news item entitled "Une démarche de la Roumanie à Athènes" appeared in the Journal de Genève. According to it, the Rumanian Minister in Athens, Rascano, had an interview with General Pangalos and the Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during which he was purported to have said : "That while recognising that Greek action was justified in face of continuous provocations of Comitadjis, he still thought that the Greek government should give a new proof of its peaceful intentions". [38] It was this news item,

---

[37] The New York Times, New York, 26 October 1925.

[38] Journal de Genève, 27 October 1925; on 24 October 1925 the news that the conditions of Greek withdrawal are being discussed through Rumania also appeared in The New York Times. Two days later, the same newspaper reported from its London correspondent that Rumania never intended to mediate. See The New York Times, 24 and 27 October 1925.

in the Journal de Genève that caused considerable embarrassment to the Greek Government. As mentioned earlier Dendarmis had reproduced this item in a telegram to Sir Eric. The text reproduced in a telegram had become a Council document circulated to all members of the Council.[38a]

In a letter of 7 November 1925, Carapanos demanded that alterations be made in the text before the Council document was printed.[38b] The manner in which a compromise solution was sought is extremely interesting. A slight diversion would complete the recitation of the incident.

Within the Secretariat, the question was handled by the Directors of the Information and Political Sections, with the final decision made by the Secretary-General himself.

Director of the Information Section, P. Vigier, pointed out the difficulties of such corrections to Paul Mantoux, Director of the Political Section. Vigier was of the opinion that it is difficult to accept the request of the Greek representative as it involved modifying a text of a telegram which was read out in public and was a part of the League Archives. The other side could protest. Paul Mantoux explained this difficulty to Carapanos personally. Sir Eric wished to avoid any controversy that might arise if Bulgaria protested.[38c]

38a LON, Document (C.634.M.213. 1925. VII).

38b For details, LON Archives, Letter from Carapanos to the Secretary-General. Legation de Grèce en France, Paris, 12 November 1925. File No. 47358.

38c But the Greek representative insisted that the line "... en reconnaissant le bien fondé de l'action de la Grèce" be substituted by "quoique reconnaissant n'avoir pas qualité pour juger le bien fondé..." This offensive line later became a footnote. See LON Archives, File No. 47358 or Document (C.661.1925).

The peace plan proposed by Rumania was apparently conceived with the consent of the Greek government. Two of its main conditions were that two officers, one from the Bulgarian and one from the Greek side, should meet in order to supervise the effective withdrawal of the Greek frontier guards back to their respective posts. After the completion of this operation, the Greek troops should withdraw from occupied Bulgarian territory. The implication appeared to be that Bulgaria had some knowledge of the conditions. Both sides had good reasons to conceal this fact from the Council.

While lengthy discussions were taking place between General Pangalos and Rascano, the Bulgarian Foreign Minister appeared to have been completely taken by surprise by this development. In an urgent telegram to the President of the Council, Kalfoff stated: "The Bulgarian government has just learned that at yesterday's meeting of the Council of the League, the Greek delegate spoke of an agreement arrived at between Greece and Bulgaria on the initiative of the Rumanian Minister at Athens. I have the honour to inform your Excellency that this statement is entirely without foundation. From the moment that Bulgaria appealed to the Council, the Royal Government has declined to enter into any direct negotiations with Greece regarding the present dispute"[39].

---

39 LON Archives, Telegram from Kalfoff to Briand, Sofia, dated 27 October 1925. Document (C. 667.1925).

Another telegram on the same day gave different details of the Bulgarian government's reaction to the question of Rumanian intervention. The earlier denial was modified: "The day before yesterday the Royal Government learned from its Chargé d'Affaires in Athens and from the Rumanian Minister in Sofia that a Greek staff officer was on his way to the Greco-Bulgarian frontier and would arrive there on Tuesday the 27th at 4 p.m. at a point near Demir-Kapu. As an act of courtesy in order to obviate any unfortunate incident, a Bulgarian officer proceeded to the place in question and at the very beginning of the conversation told the Greek officer that he was not authorised to treat with him regarding the question at issue since the Council was dealing with the matter. The Greek officer asked whether he could take away the body of the Greek sentry who was killed; in reply the Bulgarian stated that he had not received any orders to that effect. The Greek officer also asked if Greek troops might reoccupy Greek post No. 69 and in reply the Bulgarian officer stated that this post was on Greek territory and had never been occupied by their troops. Accordingly, it was for the competent Greek authorities to decide whether this post should be reoccupied or not. There the conversation ended. Everything that is being said from the Greek side in contradiction with the present is purely imaginary" [40].

At this juncture it may be recorded that the earlier diplomatic intimations appeared to be that Greece was not apparently ready to compromise and insisted on exemplary punishment and damages. The purport of the telegram sent by the Swedish Foreign Minister from Stockholm to Sir Eric Drummond further emphasised uncertainty about the Greek attitude.

---

40 LON Archives, Telegram from Kalfoff to Sir Eric, Sofia. 27 October 1925. Text in Official Journal, November 1925. Annex p. 1718.

"Greek Chargé d'Affaires privately informs me that his government presented a note verbale to Bulgaria ... Bulgarian government shall officially express its regret ... From unofficial sources I hear that Bulgaria proposes appointment Commission of Enquiry ... but I don't know attitude of Greek government" [41].

From the communications pouring into the Secretariat, it was clear that Greece was eager to seek mediation outside the League of Nations. The background to the reluctance of Greece to submit the dispute to the League was based on two points: the so called "débacle" suffered by Greece in Asia Minor in the war in 1922, and the passivity shown by the League as regards taking any action against Italy in the Corfu Incident[42] when Greece had appealed to the Council under Article 11. It is also quite possible that after ordering the Army to advance on to Bulgarian territory, the Pangalos Government was beginning to have second-thoughts. It was having serious difficulties at home, there were complaints of speculation and corruption and General Pangalos had expelled one of his closest colleagues,

---

41 LON Archives, Telegram from Undén to the Secretary-General, File No. 47292.

42 For a lucid description of the incident and the manner in which the Council acted, see Pablo de Azcárate, "à l'occasion de l'affaire de Corfu, en 1923 l'opinion publique a exercé pour la première fois une influence direct en faveur de la paix" in Tribune de Genève, 19 September 1967.

General Plastiras, [42a] from the Revolutionary Council, only two days before, on 24 October 1925. Greece was at the time under martial law.

Meanwhile, it was also being suggested that the negotiation for a Greco-Rumanian defence alliance was perhaps one of the main reasons explaining the choice by Greece of Rumania's mediation [43]. Perhaps it was a combination of all these reasons that persuaded the Greek Government to take action outside the League. But once the fact had been brought to public attention, the Greek authorities were anxious not to appear before the League as a member which was seeking to avoid its intervention by going outside. Another report in the Journal de Genève (30 October 1925) published on this crucial point confirmed that Greece was seeking solution "without intervention of the League". As explained earlier, since the League was holding its Extraordinary Session to settle this very dispute, the Greek government was very much embarrassed at the exposure of its attempt to by-pass the League. It turned out later that Bulgaria had equally attempted to settle the dispute outside the League.

42a On 26 September 1922, General Plastiras headed a revolution in Chios after troops were leaving Smyrna and King Constantine left Greece. With Colonel Gonatas, he was a member of the Revolutionary Government which attempted to return to constitutional government. In 1924, when Venizelos became Premier, he resigned, and on 26 June 1925, joined the Pangalos government.

43 Rumania's Foreign Minister Duca was vague on this when interviewed by the Press, hinting that Greco-Rumanian relations were 'stronger than alliance'. The Times, London, 3 May 1925. Another explanation current at the time was that Greece wanted to become a member of the Little Entente. For an elaboration on this point, see R. Machray, The Little Entente, London 1929, p. 259.

From the reading of the Council Minutes, it is evident that during the first two days of the Extraordinary Session, the Greek government was reluctant to accept the competence of the Council and attempted to "settle the matter in conformity with the suggestions of the Rumanian government ... to cause all operations to cease and bring back the forces behind the frontier line ..."[43a]. This intention is revealed in a telegram dated 27 October 1925 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hadjikyriakos, stating that the Greek staff captain Kanakis and the Bulgarian Colonel Zlateff met at Demir-Kapu on that day "in execution of the agreement concluded as the result of the mediation of the Rumanian government" [43b].

On 28 October, during the Council meeting when these telegrams were read out in public, the Bulgarian government also accepted the fact that "it had successfully invited the friendly intervention ... not only of Rumania, but of other powers and it had done this before the question had been laid before the Council" [43c].

By "other powers" here, the Bulgarian government alluded to its vague attempts through Turkey to appoint "a Mixed Commission of Enquiry" when this was in fact suggested by the Turkish authorities. To this Kalfoff is purported to have

---

43a See Reply of the Greek Government in a telegram dated 26 October 1925. Text in Official Journal, November, 1925, p. 1707.

43b Ibid., p. 1708.

43c Ibid., p. 1709.

replied that since the League Council was considering the issue, the Bulgarian government found it "impossible to enter into direct negotiations with the Greek government"[43d].

4. Implementation of the 26 October Resolution

From the correspondence regarding the arrangements made by the League Secretariat with the three Military Attachés, it is not clear how they were selected. The practical consideration seems to have been that the Military Attachés to the court of Belgrade were already at work in that area; and the agreement to select these particular persons must have been reached in "off the record" meetings of the permanent members of the Council [44].

The three Military Attachés, Colonels Deltel, Giles and Visconti, whose task was to implement the Council's decision to conduct an 'on the spot' enquiry, arrived at Guevgueli on 27 October 1925. Special trains were put at their disposal by the Yugoslav and Greek governments for their travel next day to Demir-Hissar, where they established their Head quarters[45] from 27 October to 9 November 1925.

43d For details of Turkish proposal, see Barros, op.cit., p.74.

44 LON Archives, Correspondence Regarding the Three Military Attachés to the Frontier to supervise the Retreat of Troops, File No. 47452.

45 LON Archives, Telegram from Colonel Deltel to Briand, Belgrade, 27 October 1925. Ibid. Colonel Deltel was the first to communicate to Briand. He was followed by Colonel Giles a few hours later. Also see Telegrame from Briand to French Ministers in Sofia and Belgrade, 27 October 1925, Ibid.

The arrangements for the supervision of the cease-fire were made within only 24 hours of the adoption of the Resolution [46].

During the course of the afternoon of 28 October, they contacted the Bulgarian and Greek commanders in charge of military operations, both of whom formally undertook to refrain from any further hostile actsand to warn their troops that any resumption of firing would be met with the severest penalties [47].

The main purpose of the visit of the Military Attachés, as stated above, was to supervise the withdrawal of troops within the time-limit set by the Council - 8 p.m. on 29 October. This was no easy task; they had to organise the withdrawal of troops in such a manner that no clash would occur as they retreated. In order to prevent the possibility of incidents, it was decided that the Bulgarians should not reoccupy the invaded territory until a certain time had

---

46 During this period, the Military Attachés kept a "journal de Marche". See LON Archives, Rapport des Attachés Militaires Délégués par le Conseil de la SDN au sujet des incidents Bulgaro-Grecs, File No. 48131.

47 LON, Telegraphic Report from the Military Attachés, Sidirokastron, 28 October 1925. (Translation from French). Document (C. 671. 1925).

elapsed [48] (the time was fixed on 30 October 1925 at 1 p.m.).

As the session of the Council in Paris renewed its consideration of the statements of the representatives of Greece and Bulgaria on 29 October, the British, French and Italian Military Attachés were in a position to report to the Council that "the Greek troops concluded the evacuation of Bulgarian territory and that it gave rise to no incident"[49]. The telegram from them also stated that "unless unforeseen circumstances occur" the Military Attachés will proceed to witness the recovery by the Greek of the body of the Greek soldier, who was killed by the Bulgarians, and whose body remained in Bulgarian territory. It was thought that their presence would obviate any possibility of fresh conflict.

On arrival at the scene of the incident, the Military Attachés proposed the following procedure in a telegram to President Briand: "Laissant de coté la partie politique de cette affaire nous nous proposons de porter nos investigations sur un certain nombre de faits d'ordre militaire et matériel qu'il y aurait intérêt à éclaircir avant que ceux qui y ont pris part aient quitté cette région ..." [50].

---

48 Ibid., p.1. The Report of the Military Attachés was communicated to the Council and members of the League the same day. LON, Document (C. 671. M. 228. 1925.VII).

49 Telegram from Military Attachés to Briand. Sidirokastron, 29 October 1925. This telegram also gives details of the position of troops at the time of withdrawal. (Translation circulated to the council and the members of the League the next day). Document (C. 672. M. 231. 1925. VII).

50 Dated 30 October 1925, ibid,,p.5.

On receipt of this telegram, Paul Mantoux, Director of the Political Section of the League, in passing the file to Sir Eric, gave his opinion in the following words: "Le télégramme, en date du 30 octobre, envoyé par les attachés militaires, pose une question qui attend une réponse. Ces officiers demandent s'il convient qu'ils portent leurs investigations sur un certain nombre de faits d'ordre militaire et matériel qu'il y aurait intérêt à éclaircir avant que ceux qui y ont pris part aient quitté la région et avant que le mauvais temps rende plus difficile l'accès des lieux. Il me semble qu'il faudrait répondre immédiatement par l'affirmative" [51]. This suggestion was apparently accepted by Sir Eric. The only indication we have of this on the file is his signature.

During their stay of ten days in the region, the Military Attachés held several meetings with the High Command [52] of both sides and interviewed the Greeks and Bulgarians who had participated in the original shooting. On the basis of this evidence, a report [53] was prepared which is illuminating and to which we must briefly turn.

The Military Attachés did not consider of great importance the fact that the body of the Greek soldier killed in the incident was found 12 to 15 paces in the Bulgarian territory. This in their opinion did not prove that the Greek soldier was killed after crossing the frontier. According to their

---

51 Dated 2 November 1925, ibid.

52 See "Journal de Marche" in LON Archives, Commission of Enquiry, Documents submitted by the Military Attachés. File no. 48131.

53 Rapport des Attachés Militaires, ibid., pp. 3-6.

investigations, it was not possible for the Greeks to remove dead soldier and leave his body where he died. In any case, it would have been very risky, due to the difficulties of the terrain, to remove it.[54] They also did not attach much importance to the death of the Greek Captain Vassiliades, whose arrival precipitated general tension. In short, they sifted the facts and information in such a way that no easy political decisions could be arrived at.

In the face of several contradictions, the Military Attachés did not wish to come to definite conclusions; instead they chose to restrict their findings to simple description.[55]

---

[54] The Greeks asserted that the sentry was dragged into Bulgarian territory after he died. Since the traces of blood had been removed, it was difficult to verify this assertion. See the Report of the medical expert, British Legation, Sofia, dated 10 November 1925, in ibid.

[55] (Italics added). ibid., p.5. According to their version, after the initial incident of 19 October, this is what followed : "Les Bulgares sont restés sensiblement sur la ligne frontière, qui suit la crête et leur assure un excellent champ de tir avec un minimum de risques, les Grecs se sont retirés à 200 mètres; mais il serait inexact de dire que les Bulgares ont pénétré en territoire grec de 150 à 200 mètres. Mais le mot "atrocité" publié dans certain journaux ne correspond pas à la vérité. Des excès graves ont pu être commis mais ils ont été exceptionnels. Les troupes grecques semblent avoir été assez bien maintenues par leurs officiers supérieurs mais la population greque a pillé quelques villages bulgares".

As was to be expected the most important part of their report, however, related to the military operations. It is interesting to note that their report under-estimates the original incident and is completely neutral on the point of premeditation. In their opinion, there was no premeditation on the part of either sides when the original incident occurred, and "there was no direct relation between Demir-Kapu and the Greek operations ... on 26 October".[56] They reported that from the Bulgarian side, civilians were known to have participated in the operations, but on the Greek side the force was vastly superior.

As rumours and reports continued to circulate in both countries that shooting had not ceased at the frontier, the Military Attachés found it necessary to send a telegram to Geneva to dispel these rumours. It confirmed that the latest information was absolutely false and that since their arrival there has been complete calm on both sides.[57]

About the causes of conflict, the Military Attachés, interestingly enough, pointed to a non-military probability. They felt that perhaps the frontier posts were placed too close to each other. The troops on both sides had an opportunity of close discussions and disputes which might have led to angry exchanges. Furthermore, those who were on guard were not sufficient in number, and were obliged to stay for periods longer than is normal. The report stated that there was a tendency on the Greek side to send to the frontier "suspicious elements". In order to avoid such a possibility in the future, they suggested that the posts should be placed at a distance, and should be relocated. More importantly, they stated that there was no connection between Demir-Kapu and the

---

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

subsequent Greek invasion [58]. But as analysed later, the Council proceeded on the assumption that the relationship between these two events was direct.

---

58 Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

1. The Withdrawal of Troops

During the proceedings of the thirty-sixth "Extraordinary Session " of the League Council in Paris, the Greek government pleaded "self defence" as a cause for its actions, for which military and political considerations were advanced. Before continuing to examine the steps taken by the Council to eliminate the causes of the dispute, it may be useful to summarise the arguments presented by the parties to the conflict [1]. It may be noted here that while the discussions at the session were going on, the Council continued to receive regular reports from the Military Attachés on the various phases of the cease-fire.

Presenting his country's case, Marfoff, the representative of Bulgaria, protested "with the greatest possible emphasis against the unjustifiable violation of her territorial integrity". Marfoff requested the Council to take three steps: to institute "a neutral enquiry under the auspices of the League of Nations to ascertain the facts on the spot and fix the responsibility"; to assess reparations for damages inflicted by Greece apart from the penalties for its grave offence against international order, particularly the violation of Articles 10, 11, 12 and 15 of the Covenant, and in addition issue instructions for setting the prisoners free.

Greece, on its part, after having given its own version of what happened initially on 19 October and describing events

---

1 These arguments are reproduced in Council Minutes, Thirty-Sixth (Extraordinary) Session, Official Journal, November 1925, pp. 1703 - 1707.

that followed, argued that both from the military and political point of view, its advance into Bulgarian territory was necessary. "The presence of a full battalion of the Bulgarian army", said Carapanos, "... proves preparations for which there is no explanation on the Bulgarian side". Explaining the reason for attacking the railway station of Decauville, near Petritch, he maintained that that action was to try and offer resistance to Bulgarian troops who had already arrived there. Furthermore, he denied that Greece had fired any shell on Petritch or upon any group of inhabitants. Carapanos reiterated that the "Greek detachments were in a position of self defence, and that they merely took steps to maintain their positions, which still excluded the possibility of any idea of attack with the object of lasting military occupation".

The Greek government, in turn, demanded compensation for the "murder of the sentinel at Post 69 and of Captain Vassiliadis", contending that there had not been on the Greek side any hostile act "likely to lead to a rupture within the terms of Article 12 of the Covenant". Concluding his statement the Greek representative said that "the Greek government attaches particular importance to the intervention of the League of Nations. It has profound faith in pacific action". There was nothing new in the positions taken by both parties. Therefore, there were no significant observations immediately after both Bulgaria and Greece put forward their respective case before the public session.

On 27 October, Austen Chamberlain, the Rapporteur, asked Carapanos a crucial question "whether he could inform the Council how deeply the Greek troops had penetrated into Bulgarian territory and how deeply the Bulgarian troops had penetrated into Greek territory". The Rapporteur

had earlier received information to the effect that the Greek government had presented a note to the Bulgarian government alleging"that Bulgarian troops had penetrated into Greek territory to a depth of from 5 to 50 metres". Carapanos reply is significant. He said that he thought that the distance was from 400 to 500 metres in depth so far as the two frontier posts were concerned. Not satisfied, Sir Austen proposed the question: "How many kilometres Greece had penetrated into Bulgarian territory?". Carapanos reply was exact: He said, "nearly eight kilometres".

This acceptance was a breakthrough as far as the Council was concerned. While the Greek government had accepted the fact that its troops were temporarily in Bulgarian territory, the big question of the final solution still remained. After hearing the views of both parties in public, Briand was convinced of the necessity of another private meeting. It appeared to him that the Greek government might not fully accept its responsibility in public and this would lead to serious disagreements on the question of indemnities and reparations. To avoid this impasse, the Council went into private session on the evening of 27 October 1925. The following is a summary of discussions which lasted for two hours [2].

In the private meeting, in which, apart from the President and Rapporteur, the representatives of Italy, Japan and Sweden were present (Scioloja, Ishii and Undén). The agenda was precise. The discussion was frank and

---

2 LON Archives, Record of Proceedings at Private Informal Meeting of the Council (confidential), 27 October 1925, File No. 47477.

tended to be swift. Two main questions were considered: Whether a Commission of Enquiry should be appointed, and if so, what should be its jurisdiction with regard to damages and compensation; and, what action should the Council take if two parties did not comply with the decision of the Council [1].

On the first question, there was general agreement; the principle of appointing a Commission of Enquiry was accepted by the Council members within a few minutes. But on the second point, the discussion was rather lengthy. Sharp differences of opinion emerged on the "possible refusal of Greece to comply with the League's decision". The Council considered possible solutions of the dispute and probed the possibilities of applying sanctions under Article XVI of the Covenant. Discussed later the Secretariat of the League had prepared a number of papers on sanctions before the opening of the session. It also took into account some action with regard to establishing a demilitarised zone. But its biggest anxiety was whether the parties to the dispute would adhere to its earlier resolution and withdraw their troops behind the national frontiers.

The discussion, therefore, began with the alternative solutions in the event of parties not implementing the terms of the 26 October Resolution. President Briand emphasised that the "Council must use every means in its power" to come to a solution. Sir Austen agreed with this general principle, and pointed out that the Council must follow the "action" provided for in Article XVI. He felt that "Bulgaria would adhere to the Resolution", but that he did not "feel certain about Greece". He asked the Council members to propose alternative steps should "Greece refuse to adhere".

At this point, President Briand asked whether a neutral band of territory between the two countries was feasible. Sir Austen supplied the information that under the Treaty of Lausanne, such a strip of about 30 kilometres was established between Turko-Bulgarian and Turko-Greek borders. Both Briand and Chamberlain then considered the possibilities of making this proposal to the parties to the dispute.

On this point, the Council members apparently had certain disagreements. Vittorio Sciolaloja, the representative of Italy, appeared doubtful about the advisibility of establishing a neutral zone, while the representative of Japan, Viscount Ishii, was more categorical; he was against any such step.

Turning to the question of the Commission of Enquiry and its jurisdiction, Östen Undén, the representative of Sweden, suggested that it should not fix indemnities but only specify damages done to person and property. Sir Eric Drummond then said that a commission of four - two military men and two civilians - ought to be appointed for the purpose of assessing damages. No one appears to have objected to this suggestion.

The point on which the Council had sharp differences and on which it spent a considerable amount of time was the question of coercive measures under Article XVI of the Covenant. Sir Eric began by saying that the first step ought to be that ambassadors should be withdrawn from the"non-adhering country". But Briand proposed a more definite line of action and observed that the rumoured proposals for Rumania's intervention in the dispute were intended to "mask League action".

Briand further warned the members of the dangers of a "leak becoming a flood", and said that if the sanctions under Article XVI were applied it would affect both the "guilty and the innocent", insisting that the Council's action should be "sudden, strong and decisive". He said that the usual argument advanced against the League was that its machinery was clumsy and that "it took an inordinate time to set its wheels in motion".

Scioloja then suggested that there should be a naval blockade (he had of course Greece in mind). No one else took up the suggestion. Sir Eric simply replied: "this was an unnecessarily large action for such a case", saying that punishment must fit the crime. The Council then adjourned, deciding that consideration of the action under Article XVI be postponed and "was not necessary for the moment".

Meanwhile contradictory telegrams were arriving from Sofia and Athens which further contributed to the doubts already expressed in the private session of the Council. It was not clear <u>at what time who was occupying whose territory</u>. Between 27 and 29 October, several telegrams and letters were exchanged between the President of the Council and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of both Bulgaria and Greece. (We have already noted that the Military Attachés had quite a different view of the subject).

An urgent telegram was sent by Kalfoff to the President on 27 October stating that the allegation by a Greek staff officer that the Bulgarians were reoccupying Post 69, where the original incident occurred, was totally

incorrect [3]. Next day, on 28 October, in another telegram the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs assured the Council that Bulgaria had given strict instructions to its troops "to abstain from any military operation" and that there was no Bulgarian soldier on Greek territory [3a]. Whereas Admiral Hadjikyriakos, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the Council on the same day that on the night of 27 October a Bulgarian detachment had attacked Post No. 73 on the Petritch-Romna line. "The fighting", according to one telegram "was continuing at the moment the despatch was sent off". Another telegram added that in view of this Bulgarian aggression in violation of the decisions of the Council, the military command has "issued instructions to hold up the withdrawals of our troops until they are able to break off the engagement" [4].

On 28 October, while the Council session continued to consider the dispute in public, the situation at the frontier had qualitatively changed. Both the visit of the Military Attachés and what may be termed as "gentle persuasion" during the private meeting held began to yield concrete results. The tone of the speeches of the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece changed slightly. From pleading "self defence" and justifying Greek action, Carapanos shifted the emphasis to the peaceful intentions of his government. His line of reasoning indicated this change. He said that "within the period fixed the troops will be withdrawn behind the frontier line and that no

---

3 LON Archives, Telegram from Kalfoff to Briand, Sofia, dated 28 October 1925. File No. 47367.

3a LON Archives, Telegram from Hadjikyriakos to Briand, dated 28 October 1925. File No. 47363 or Document (668. M.22 1925. VII).

4 Ibid.

operations will be undertaken". He assured the Council that there were no "warlike intentions" on the part of the Greek government, and that Greece was not planning a "policy of conquest" [5]. Similarly, Marfoff communicated a telegram to the Council indicating that fresh orders had been sent to the Bulgarian military command to withdraw immediately any Bulgarian troops which might be on Greek territory [6]. Marfoff moved his position from completely denying the possibility of Bulgarian troops on Greek territory to accepting its possibility.

The Greek government, meanwhile, had sent a communication to Sir Eric to the effect that the withdrawal of troops "was completed eight hours before the expiration of time-limit fixed by the Council" [7]. But the telegram from the Military Attachés contradicted this. It said that they had found a "number of Greeks 10 kilometres east of Demir-Kapu". In this case, it seems that the messages may have overlapped in point of time [8].

On the third day of the "Extraordinary Session" the Military Attachés were in a position to report to the

---

5 Thirty-Sixth (Extraordinary) Session, Official Journal, 25 November 1925, p. 1708.

6 (Italics added). ibid., p. 1707.

7 Ibid., p. 1711.

8 See text of the telegram from Military Attachés to the Commander of the 6th Greek Army Division in LON Archives, Documents communicated by the Military Attachés. File No. 48131.

Council that the withdrawal of Greek troops had begun [9]. Confirming this, Hadjikyriakos, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, assured the League that "in spite of the difficulties due to the presence of armed bands ... it will neglect no steps to ensure that the Bulgarian territory is evacuated by the hour laid down" [10]. Further telegrams came from Sofia and Athens stating that the Greek troops had evacuated Bulgarian territory "before the time-limit".

The threatening emergency was thus over. But not without a certain amount of pressure on Athens outside the corridors of the League. For this view, we have the evidence of Charles H. Bateman, in charge of Greek Affairs for the Foreign Office Central Department in London. On 26 October 1925, he recorded his estimate of the possible motives for Greek advance in Bulgarian territory. He rejected the theory put forward by Greece that the purpose of military operations was to dislodge the Bulgarians from two frontier posts in Greek territory. "Bateman presumed that if the Greeks remained recalcitrant, the League would deal with them in one of the following ways: either they would threaten a demonstration by the Allied fleet at Piraeus, Athens' adjacent sea port; or they would threaten to allow Bulgaria to arm in self-defence. The latter he noted would frighten the life out of (General) Pangalos".

Lest Greece refused to consent to the withdrawal of its troops, the League Secretariat had also prepared a couple of briefs for the Secretary-General, Eric Drummond. The

---

9 Telegram from Sidirokastron dated 28 October 1925, Text in LON, Thirty-Sixth (Extraordinary Session), Official Journal, 25 November 1925, p. 1711.

10 Ibid.

contents of the Secretariat papers and Drummond's response is discussed in the conlusions.

Having secured the formal consent of the parties to the dispute to the withdrawl of troops, the Council then turned to the investigation of the deeper causes of the conflict and presented another resolution proposing additional measures of security[11] measures which it was pointless to discuss so long as the hostile armies faced each other ready for further shooting.

By the morning of 29 October, both the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece were able to declare more definitely the decision of their governments to comply with the decision of the Council. They had received fresh instructions from Sofia [12] and Athens [13]. Furthermore, the Military Attachés informed the Secretary-General that the task of evacuation was completed [14].

---

11 Cited from Public Record Office, File No. 13309, FO/371/10672/PRO. Foreign Office, London in Barros, op cit., p.69. On the eve of this Resolution, all sorts of news reports appeared conjecturing on the League's steps. One such report appeared in The New York Times, stating that "the League was planning a new security compact for Balkan States". 28 October 1925.

12 Telegram from Kalfoff to Marfoff, Sofia, dated 27 October 1925, in Official Journal, November 1925, p. 1707.

13 LON, Letter from Carapanos addressed to Sir Eric, enclosing the telegram from Hadjikyriakos, Greek Legation, Paris, 29 October 1925. (Document C. 670. 1925).

14 LON, Telegram from the Military Attachés to Sir Eric, Sidirokastron, dated 29 October 1925. Text in Document (C. 672.1925). Confirmed by Carapanos, Paris. Letter enclosing telegram Hadjikyriakos, Paris, 30 October 1925 in Document (C. 637. 1925).

Meanwhile the draft resolution was ready and the Rapporteur awaited the opportunity to present it. After the cease-fire and the termination of hostilities came to the knowledge of the Council [15]. Sir Austen Chamberlain began by saying that "since the hostilities had ceased and all troops had withdrawn behind their respective national frontiers ... the Council can now proceed to the consideration of the steps required for a complete and final solution of the difficulties which have arisen ... and finally to propose a commission for a final settlement ... It appears from the declarations made by the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece ... that their governments would wish the Council to enquire into the origin of the incident ... But as the President of the Council said yesterday, there is another point of greater permanent importance. It is that some means should be found to eliminate for the future the likelihood of such an incident which could again give rise to a similar problem as the recent trouble ...".

Sufficient ground had been prepared in the corridors outside the public session, so that the Resolution was unanimously adopted. The resolution made a number of proposals fixing the procedure of the Commission and assigning its responsibility to investigating the incident and suggesting measures for the future reduction of similar incidents. The operative part of the resolution read that: the Council has decided " ... to appoint a Commission of Enquiry to carry out a full enquiry into the recent incidents on the frontier between Bulgaria and Greece to the north-east of Salonika and to ascertain as exactly as possible the origin of these incidents ... ". The terms of reference of the Commission were that "The Commission in particular shall establish the facts enabling the responsibility to be fixed and supply the necessary

material for the determination of any indemnities or reparation which may be considered appropriate. " - Shall submit a report ... in order that the Council may be in a position to make suitable recommendation to the governments concerned. " - Shall be entitled to conduct its investigation both on the spot and at the seats of the governments concerned ... ". [16]

When the meeting ended that day, the President had good reason to give a sigh of relief. He said that "this painful dispute, if, as he believed, it might be regarded as ended, would at least have contributed considerably to the cause of peace "thanks to the promptness with which the two parties had accepted the suggestions of the Council". [17]

The Resolution adopted, the Council turned to other matters.

Since the political reasons were not discussed in the Council the following report by a special correspondent of Politika (belgrade) at Guévgéli published on 29 October 1925 may be of some relevant in throwing light on the thinking of a neighbouring country equally affected by regular frontier incidents.

---

[16] For text of Resolution, see Official Journal, November 1925, p. 1713.

[17] Ibid., p. 1719.

It must be noted that Yugoslavia was equally disturbed by the frontier incidents and the activities of the Macedonian Revolutionary Committee which encouraged them.[17a] At the same time, in October 1925, its relations with Greece were cordial as a result of the agreement to inaugurate a free commercial zone in Salonika. With Bulgaria, similarly, there were no overt acts of hostility despite the regular activities of the Comitadjis pin-pricking at its borders. Considering the background, therefore, it is significant that an independent newspaper like Politika should carry the above article. As discussed in the next Section, Dr. Nintchitch, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, gave an equally candid and frank view of "Comitadjis" activities to the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the League.

17a The report, a copy of which was sent to the League Secretariat stated "... le meurtre du soldat grèc, à la suite duquel le conflit s'est aggravé, est le résultat d'une lutte de plusieurs mois entre les réfugiés grecs de l'Asie-Mineure et les indigènes slaves de la Macédoine grecque. Une chose est évidente, c'est que les grecs, pour placer un nombre considérable de leurs nationaux afflues de l'Asie-Mineurs, ont cruellement traité les familles slaves, serbes et bulgares ... Déjà le 4 octobre, un incident qui a dégénéré en lutte véritable s'est produit en territoire grec entre les aborigènes, d'une part, et les réfugiés et gendarmes grécs, d'autre part. Depuis, ces conflits sont devenus de plus en plus fréquents. A cause de leurs réfugiés, les Grecs ont maltraité les slavophones et ces derniers ont opposé une résistance ... plusieurs paysans ont commencé à fuire dans la direction de la frontière bulgare ... un colonel grec, ami du général Plastiras arrêté, m'a communiqué confidentiellement que le gouvernement actuel grec, à la veille des élections municipales et de la nouvelle révolution, avait besoin de cet incident ..." LON Archives, League Commission of Enquiry, Press Articles, File No. 48134.

2. The Appointment of the Commission of Enquiry

The decision to appoint the Commission of Enquiry as stated earlier, was taken in private session, while the proposal for its composition was discussed in public session [18]. There appeared to have been no opposition to the idea that three of its members should be from Britain, France and Italy. To give the Commission an air of impartiality, two members were selected from the neutral countries, namely, the Netherlands and Sweden. There was no discussion on the issue of countries to be represented on the Commission of Enquiry.

The Secretariat sent several letters to the governments selected to name their representatives on the day the Resolution to appoint the Commission was passed [19]. The proposal about who should represent the country in each case came from the Foreign Ministries of Britain, France, Italy, Netherlands and Sweden. The main consideration in selecting members of the Commission, including its chairman, appears to have been the previous experience of the candidates in the Balkans or in earlier commissions of enquiry. The Commission was composed of Sir Horace Rumbold [20], the British Ambassador

---

18 LON Archives, Greco-Bulgarian Frontier Incident, Appointment of a League Commission of Enquiry, File No. 47451.

19 Telegram from Sir Eric to all the members including Greece and Bulgaria, ibid.

20 Rt. Hon. Sir Horace Rumbold, G.C.M.G., was previously Minister Plenipotientary in Berne, Warsaw and Constantinople and was a member of the Greco-Bulgarian Commission in Constantinople. His letter of appointment as chairman of the commission was sent by the Secretary-General of the League, Sir Eric Drummond, on 29 October 1925. For the text of the letter and the Report on the Resolution and reply from Madrid dated 30 October 1925, ibid.

in Paris as Chairman, and two French and Italian Military Officers, General Serrigny [21] and General Ferrario [22]. Two civilians from Sweden and Netherlands, de Aldercreutz[23] and Drooglever Fortuyn [24] were also included. To this list were added members of the League Secretariat [25].

In defining the terms of reference of the Commission of Enquiry as set out in the resolution of 29 October, the Council introduced innovations [26] which had been

---

21 For correspondence regarding General Serrigny, see ibid.

22 General Ferrario was recommended by Baron Paulucci de Calboli, see Letter from Rome to Attolico, ibid.

23 Drooglever Fortuyn was a Member of Parliament and a judge at the Hague Tribunal. See Letter from Undén to Sir Eric, dated 30 October, ibid.

24 De Aldercreutz was Swedish Minister at the Hague. See Letter from Osten Undén to Sir Eric, Paris, dated 30 October 1925, ibid.

25 They were Major Abraham (British) Secretary of the Commission. The three assistant secretaries were Z.M. Cespedes (British); M. Methenet (French); Count L. Pietromarchi (Italian). The interpreter was from a neutral country, Russia. Major Abraham was well-acquainted with Balkan problems and Methenet had previous experience of work in Macedonia.

26 For a historical survey see Lord Phillimore, Schemes for Maintaining General Peace, Handbooks prepared under the direction of the Foreign Office, No. 160. H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1920, pp. 12 - 23.

established in 1921 and was subsequently missing in other Commissions of Enquiry [26a] appointed by the Council. All the other Commissions, briefly discussed below, were under an obligation to conduct an enquiry; were authorised to investigate facts only. Their terms of reference did not include the authorisation to go a step ahead and find a solution based on the facts investigated.

Before the Greco-Bulgare dispute, the first two cases - The Aaland Islands (1920)[27] and the Mosul Affair (1924-1925)[28], the commissions were empowered to solve the problem of attribution of territory. In the third case - the Status of Memel (1923-1924)[29], the main task of the Commission of Enquiry was to establish an administration for

---

26a For a comparison of the procedure of appointment of other Commissions of Enquiry of the League, see the list of these commissions up to 1925 in Official Journal, March 1926. The procedure followed was that the parties to each bilateral treaty agreed to set up an International Commission of Enquiry consisting of five members. Each side chose two members, one national and one non-national and the fifth member, a citizen of a third State, was chosen by agreement of the parties. For a fuller discussion of the history of how these bilateral treaties were evolved by Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, see A. Zimmern, The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, London, 1939, p. 128 and C. Vulcan, La Conciliation dans le droit international actuel, Paris, 1932, pp. 26-32.

27 Official Journal, Special supplement No. 1, August, 1920.

28 Official Journal, January 1924, pp. 1291-1292.

29 Official Journal, January 1924, pp. 122-123.

a territory. It was in the Albanian Frontier case (1921) [30] for the first time that the Council had appointed a Commission of Enquiry, entrusted with somewhat wider authority - not only to supervise the withdrawal of troops from Serbia and to report their evacuation but also to propose measures for prevention of disturbances in the future. The way was thus open for the Commission to consider the possibilities of a demilitarised zone, the idea touched upon briefly in the private session.

In the instances cited above, the procedure of appointment of a Commission of Enquiry was more formal in the sense that the Rapporteur proceeded to advise the Council and define its powers and duties in a formal Report which was then put to resolution.

The report outlined the factors in the dispute, stated what needed to be settled and referred to the statements of the disputants. The Resolution specified in a formal and careful manner, the powers and duties of the Commission. The President then invited the parties to make their comments and state their objections.

Improving upon previous experiences, the Council now assigned for the first time a much superior task to the Commission of Enquiry in this dispute. It was given the various functions of investigation, since temporary peace had already been arranged by the Military Attachés. Another innovation made in this case as compared with the earlier Commissions was that the Council exercised its

---

30 Official Journal, 1921, pp. 474-484. This case is not listed under 'Political Questions dealt with by the League' in Aufricht, op.cit.

initiative and relied upon its own judgement in proposing its powers and duties and in choosing the personnel of the Commission. Furthermore, the disputants were asked to approve the arrangements; and the President of the Council, departing from previous practice, went so far as to seek specially the assurance of the Greek representative on whether or not he approved the terms of reference of the Commission.

In the appointment of this Commission the Council appeared to have followed an ad hoc procedure rather than any established rules.

The point to be noted in the Greco-Bulgarian case, is that the authorisation though incorporated in a resolution, was arrived at by formal and exclusive agreement between the disputants. The terms of reference were proposed by the Rapporteur, who had weighed the arguments and carefully noted the suggestions advanced by both parties and who had studied all the relevant documents sent to the Secretary-General by the disputants. He was therefore in a position to judge impartially what the situation required. A great deal depended on his skill in inducing the disputants to agree to a plan of action.

CHAPTER VII

THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

1. The Report of the Commission

(a) The Procedure for its submission

After the completion of the Report in Belgrade, Sir Horace Rumbold, the President of the Commission, was of the opinion that both Greek and Bulgarian representatives should have it in their hands before the Council met. It was immediately communicated to the Bulgarian and Greek Ministers of Foreign Affairs through their respective legations in Yugoslavia. Furthermore, he obtained the agreement of the League Secretary-General that it should not be communicated to the Press before the meeting of the Council [1].

In a letter, Sir Horace also informed the Greek government of the Commission's decision concerning indemnities: "The Greek Republic owes the Bulgarian Government the sum of 20 million levas as compensation for the movable property (including damage or partial damage done to buildings), cattle, etc. carried off during the occupation by Greek troops of Bulgarian territory" [2]. The letter contained only this brief statement without giving any reasons as to how or why the Commission arrived at this sum. The Commission acted

---

1 LON Archives, From Drummond to Chamberlain, Geneva, 17 November 1925. File No. 47802.

2 Ibid.

"in conformity with the Resolution adopted by the Council on 29 October and in view of the fact that the Bulgarian and Greek governments in response to the Council's invitation, have agreed that these questions should be submitted to the Commission of Enquiry for final settlement". A copy of this letter was also sent to Sofia with the request that its contents be kept "confidential" until the Council had discussed the Report [3].

Meanwhile, the Draft Report was circulated to all members before the meeting of the Thirty-seventh session of the Council. The draft received by all the members of the Council is interesting in one respect. In describing Greek responsibility, the Report stated that Greek troops had advanced "in the Bulgarian territory". As we shall discuss later, the published Report omitted the words, "in the Bulgarian territory" [4].

The procedure proposed by Sir Horace to keep the Report confidential was approved by all the members of the Council. Sir Eric Drummond received letters and telegrams from several members on the question of the procedure adopted by the

---

3 LON Archives, Letters and Telegrams despatched by the Commission of Enquiry, File No. 48137.

4 The Report was prepared in English but was printed in French first. For the original copy, see Report, Commission of Enquiry into the Incidents on the VII Frontier between Bulgaria and Greece, in Document (C. 727. M.270, 1925 VII) or LON Archives, Draft Report of the Commission of Enquiry, File No. 48140.

Council [5]. The representative of Uruguay said: "J'approuve entièrement la réponse que vous avez bien voulu faire au Président de la Commission". Benes also wrote approvingly from Prague: "Accord votre réponse à Sir Horace Rumbold relative procédure" [6]. K. Ishii, the Japanese representative to the League, wrote to Sir Eric that "la procédure proposée par le Président de la commission me semble tout à fait opportune ..." [7]. From Briand who was in Paris at the time, Sir Eric received the following reply: "J'ai l'honneur de vous fair connaître que j'approuve pleinement les termes de cette réponse".

(b) The Report

The Report was carefully and precisely drawn up and in its printed version is fifteen pages long [8]. It contained an historical summary of the Demir-Kapu incident and ended with conclusions to be drawn from the incident. The major question of Greek military action in Bulgarian territory, including the technical aspects of the operations was dealt with in one of the sections which is concise. After giving the historical summary of the original incident, the Report was divided into four main parts: The introduction which spells out the authority of the Commission; the enquiry which includes an historical summary, the conclusions to be

---

5 LON, Document (C. 727. M. 27)

6 Dated 27 November 1925. ibid.

7 Dated 20 November 1925. ibid.

8 The Report included a sketch map of Demir-Kapu. See Official Journal, February 1926, Annex 815, pp. 196 - 209 or Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII).

drawn from the incident, on account of Greek military action in Bulgarian territory, details of the "Measures" successively adopted in Greece and Bulgaria and technical aspects of the operations. The third section deals with responsibilities and indemnities, and the final one with Recommendations [9].

The following is a brief resumé of the Report, which became a conference document on which the discussions and decisions in the Council were based. It should perhaps be mentioned here that the Commission was authorised to deal with the establishment of those facts which could determine responsibility and collect necessary material so that indemnities or reparations could be considered by the Council. In addition, it was to make "suggestions which in its opinion would eliminate or minimise the general causes of such incidents and prevent their recurrence" [10].

The historical summary as introduced by the Commission of Enquiry, is relevant in that it shows how the members sifted evidence provided to them. So far as description of events was concerned, it was very precise. The Greek post No. 69 and the Bulgarian post No. 1 are stationed in a pass through the frontier hills known as Demir-Kapu, a distance of about 40 meters separating the two posts.

---

9 Ibid., p. 196.

10 Ibid., p. 10.

Neither post is visible from the other, but the sentinels stationed on the frontier line itself face each other on either side of the pass, also at a distance of 40 metres" [11]. After giving details of the surrounding country and the number of men at each post, the Commission gave its own assessment of the incident: "On 19 October at about 1.30 p.m. according to the Greeks and 2.45 p.m. according to the Bulgarians, shots were exchanged between the two soldiers, there being no witnesses. The Greek soldier was killed after he had fired". "Their being no witnesses" was indicative of the fact that the Commission did not wish to commit itself on the important question of "who fired first ?" [12].

On the two basic questions of whether the Greek sentry was killed in Bulgarian territory and the manner of death of Captain Vassiliadis, the Commission differed from the views of the disputants. The first question, they thought was only of "relative importance" since the soldiers lived on friendly terms and the Greek sentry could have in the normal course proceeded a few metres beyond the frontier. On Captain Vassiliadis' death, like the Military Attachés, the Commission was not able to 'form a definite conclusion'. After describing the military preparations on both sides of the frontier after the shooting at Demir-Kapu, the Commission

---

11 LON Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII).

12 In this connection, compare Carapanos' statement to the effect that"at the first shot a Greek sentinel was killed", made before the second meeting (27 October 1925), Council Minutes, Thirty-Sixth Extraordinary Session, Official Journal, November 1925, p. 1704. Also statement by Marfoff in ibid., p. 1701.

gives its own opinion, which should be reproduced in its own words: "It seems that on both sides lack of confidence in the honest intentions of the adversary unfortunately prevented that conciliation which, in previous similar circumstances, Greek and Bulgarian officers had been able to effect. The reported reinforcement of the line by armed civilians and the false report that a Bulgarian battalion was on the spot undoubtedly helped to produce a conviction in the minds of the Greek command that operations on a large scale were afoot and it was essential therefore to take adequate precautions. At the same time, the news of death of an emissary caused a deep impression throughout the whole country" [13].

The conclusions drawn by the Commission from the original incident may be summarised thus: [14] That Demir-Kapu, called by the Commission an "affray", was "only one incident among many", due to the fact that the frontier zones were inhabited by unsettled populations; and furthermore that friction between the two frontier posts was inevitable, "even had no political dissensions existed between two countries".

Soldiers' quarrels had acquired "particular importance because the organisation of the frontier guard was defective" and the personnel manning them had 'no special qualification', their length of service offered serious disadvantages from the point of view of morale, discipline and even the proper execution of their duties, their intellectual level was too

---

13 LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII).

14 Ibid., p. 5.

low to carry out instructions, and finally the opportunities for disputes between the posts were "increased by the presence of flocks [15] in the neighbourhood of the frontier".

The Commission's Report indicated that Athens had instructed the staff of the Third Army Corps "to take more general steps" than the local authorities had taken when the original incident took place. Up to 20-21 October, the military measures taken were nothing more than "perfectly legitimate precautions". The Army Corps acted in the belief that Bulgarians had attacked the Greek post and that "Comitadjis" were supporting the Bulgarian action. At this point, the Report attempts to explain that "these measures seem all the more natural if we consider that at the time the Army Corps was in a difficult position. All the infantry units of its two divisions were concentrated throughout the villages to ensure law and order during the municipal elections". It may be recalled that General Pangalos was concentrating his strength in this area to ensure that his candidate would win support in a politically uncertain and unstable area [16].

Turning to the big question of "Greek military action in Bulgarian territory", the Commission gave a step-by-step summary of the information received in Athens from 19

---

15 According to the Commission, "these flocks belong either to nomad Kutso-Vlach shepherds or to the military units or to the posts". ibid.

16 For details, see orders of the Third Army Corps in LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270 1925. VII). Also Politika, Belgrade, 29 October 1925, in which an article appeared to this effect.

October in order to conclude that military action amounted to invasion.

It was on 20 October, acting on the information of their intelligence officer transmitted in a 'slightly altered form', [17] that the news 'assumed an extremely serious aspect' [18]. From the enquiry conducted by the Commission, it is quite clear that the successive measures adopted in Greece and Bulgaria within the next three days led to a rapid deterioration of the situation as (described in Chapter 1.3). The orders of the Greek Ministry of War to the Fourth Army Corps [19] to advance into Bulgarian territory on 20 October, say the report, "amounted to invasion of Bulgarian territory" [20].

The report validated this conclusion by listing the successive orders given to the Greek army. The Commission was of the opinion that by 21 October the Greek units concentrated to encircle Petritch and the original (ordre de marche) was superseded by an instruction from the Ministry of War "to avoid casualities". On 22 October, the execution of the orders began and in the next two days the troops consolidated their position. In its own words: "A special operation against Petritch with two battalions, three batteries and two squadrons was arranged in the evening of the 23rd and was to be carried out on the 24th, but at 6 a.m. on that day orders for the "suspension of operations" was received from Athens and the attack on Petritch did not

---

17 Ibid., p. 6.

18 Ibid.

19 For the text of the Order of the Fourth Army Corps which contained details of preparing an invasion in the direction of Nevrokop with the object of diverting and containing Bulgarian forces, see Chapter II.

20 LON, Report Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII).

take place" [21]. The Report also describes the preparations on the Bulgarian side, on 22 October, when the existing troops from nearby companies "were reinforced" by 432 civilians. "Not all of these, however, were armed; those who were unarmed acted as liaison and supply troops" [22].

The members of the Commission spent a considerable part of their time in examining the technical aspects of the operations and decided that the "Demir-Kapu affair could have been settled on the spot" [23]. They were of the view that as soon as the military situation stabilised, the "Greeks should have been satisfied with securing the other frontier passes and should not have entered Bulgarian territory" [24]. While the Greeks chose to do otherwise, the Commission did not accuse them of having prepared the attack before the incident at Demir-Kapu. It simply stated "there can be no premeditation on either side". From this point onwards, the Report draws the general conclusion that "the Greek government intended to cover its communications with Thrace and to carry out a policing operation [25]. Probably it did not weigh all the possible results of its action, nor perhaps did it realise that without having sent an ultimatum, it was committing an act of aggression against Bulgaria". By using the expression "policing operation", the Commission implied that the measures undertaken by Greece were less than an attack or invasion. The picture on the other side was, of course, different.

---

21 Ibid., p. 6-7.

22 Ibid., p. 7.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Italics added.

The Commission placed on record the fact that "the Bulgarian Government acted in conformity with the Covenant... and the fact that Bulgarian soldiers at Demir-Kapu have at one moment penetrated a few yards into Greek territory cannot be held to be a violation of the territorial integrity of Greece" [26].

With regard to Greece, the Commission noted that the relations of Greece with Bulgaria prior to Demir-Kapu "were good and the Prime Minister of Greece never attributed to the Bulgarian government the least attention of attacking Greece". Greece simply considered the incident as a contribution by "Comitadjis". Taking into consideration circumstantial evidence such as the fact that at the time the Head at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs was absent [27] and that Captain Vassiliadis' death aroused a lot of emotion, the Commission did not absolve Greece from its responsibility. It said, "that by occupying a part of Bulgarian territory with its military forces, Greece

---

26 LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C.727. M. 270. 1925. VII). On this point later, General Serrigny told the Council that from a purely military point of view a distinction must be made between measures taken to cover the frontier and violation of the frontier, ibid., p. 14.

27 Due to various political upheavals in Greece discussed earlier, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs changed hands three times after the coup d'état of Pangalos in June 1925. Rentis was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Pangalos' government but was for some reason absent from his post at the time the Demir-Kapu incident occurred. For the statement, see LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII), p. 13. At the time of the Enquiry, it was Admiral Hadjikyriakos who was interviewed as the "temporary successor" to Rentis. Rumours were current that Rentis tendered his resignation because General Pangalos wished to give a free hand to the Salonika Army Corps. Rentis was back at his post only a week before the Thirty-Seventh Session began. For the view that Rentis resigned due to his opposition to Pangalos, see The Times, London. 26 October 1925.

violated the Covenant of the League of Nations" [28].

The Commission rejected the claims of the Greek government to any indemnity except for the death of Captain Vassiliadis and decided that the "Greek government is responsible for the expenses, losses and suffering caused to the Bulgarian people and the Government by the invasion of Greek troops and on this account should make reparations to Bulgaria" [29].

It may be noted here that the Bulgarian government submitted claims amounting to fifty-two and a half million levas (approximately £78,828 at the current rate of exchange), but the Commission of Enquiry cut this figure to almost half when assessing material and moral loss. The Commission took into account loss of life, the number of wounded and numbers made homeless as a result of Greek invasion. The total sum was then reduced on account of the death of the Greek captain. Assessing material loss based on personal visits to Bulgarian villages, The Commission found that 'invaded districts' had suffered considerable loss to movable property but that the 'damage to buildings was insignificant'. The principal losses consisted in clothing, bedding, cattle, beehives, cereal, cotton, wagons etc.

---

28 Ibid., p. 8.

29 Ibid., p. 9.

The reasons for reducing the Bulgarian claims were given as follows: "The Commission feels bound to take into account the well-known fact that in submitting claims for damage sustained, private persons are generally inclined to over-estimate the value of goods they have lost and to increase the amount of their claim in proportion, as they know it is difficult to verify their statements" [30].

This, then was the logical sequence in which the Commission proceeded to establish responsibility and calculate indemnities, but it is equally important to note that about one-third of the Report of the Commission is devoted to "Recommendations".

Turning to historical considerations, the Commission examined the political situation by giving a lengthly sketch of the position of refugees in Bulgaria and Greece. It went on to analyse the contribution of the "Macedonian Committee" [31] and the "Revolutionary Macedonian Committee" [32] to the political upheavals on the frontiers. It was then that the Commission turned to the various definitions of "Comitadjis" [33] without coming to any definite conclusions about their background.

As noted earlier, the main purpose of the political recommendations of the Commission was to remove the basic sources of discontent. Thus, the first priority ranking was given to the liquidation of property of emigrants under

---

30 Ibid., p. 10.

31 Ibid.

32 For details see Chapter II.

33 Ibid.

the provisions of the Convention concerning Reciprocal Emigration (1919),[34] and the second to the consideration of establishing a demilitarised zone between Greece and Bulgaria.

Under this Convention, the two governments recognised "the right of those of their subjects who belonged to racial, religious or linguistic minorities to emigrate freely to their respective territories". Their real property had to be liquidated in the country which they left. The time limit for making declarations claiming this right of voluntary emigration had expired on 31 December 1924. The Commission suggested that the value of real property should be fixed by a Mixed Commission consisting of two representatives of the countries of two neutral members chosen by the League [35]. On questions of Bulgarians of Greek nationality, the Commission quoted Articles 3 and 4 of the

---

34 For a more detailed analysis of the procedural problems involved in liquidation of the property of Bulgarians in Greece, See The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, op.cit., p. 47. For subsequent agreement under this convention, see Chapter III.

35 LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII). p.13.

Treaty of Sèvres,[36] according to which these persons had the right to return and retain immovable property for which the Greek government was supposed to compensate. Their land had been used to rehabilitate refugees from Turkey.

---

36 Article 3 stipulates that "Greece admits and declares to be Greek nationals ipso facto and without the requirement of any formality Bulgarian or Turkish (or Albanian) nationals habitually resident at the date of coming into force of the present Treaty in territories transferred to Greece by Treaties subsequent to January 1st 1913 ...".

"... Nevertheless the persons referred to above who are over 18 years of age will be entitled, under the conditions contained in the said Treaties, to opt for any other nationality which may be open to them. Option by a husband covers his wife and option by parents will cover their children under 18 years of age. Persons who have exercised the above right to opt must, except where it is otherwise provided in the said Treaties, transfer within the succeeding twelve months their place of residence to the state for which they have opted. They will be entitled to retain their immovable property in Greek territory. They may carry with them their movable property of every description. No export duties may be imposed upon them in connection with the removal of such property". According to Article 4 "Greece admits and declares to be Greek nationals ipso facto and without the requirement of any formality persons of Bulgarian or Turkish nationality who were born in the territories referred to in Article 3 of parents habitually resident there ...".

" ... Nevertheless, within two years from the coming into force of the present Treaty, these persons may make a declaration before the competent Greek authorities in the country in which they are resident stating that they abandon Greek nationality, and they will then cease to be considered Greek nationals ...". Treaty of Sèvres, op. cit.

The Commission considered that these difficult questions could be solved only if the Greek government "displayed special goodwill in this respect", recommending that "either the time-limit to make declaration of emigration should be extended or a special protocol by the two governments should be signed" [37].

Other measures recommended by the Commission were the following: while reading these it should be kept in mind that the Commission preferred a step-by-step approach and was realistic enough to realise that all or none might succeed.

(i) Measures to prevent frontier incidents

The Commission recommended that the posts should be at a distance of one kilometre, and each side should employ a neutral officer for two years, adding that "it seems possible to take a certain number of technical measures to avoid the recurrence of such incidents in the future".

The Commission suggested four such measures dealing with the age, recruitment, training and organisation of the frontier guards. The causes of serious incidents at Demir-Kapu were "above all by the daily contact of young and insufficiently officered troops ... The men ought to be older, well-paid and the officers selected with care" [38].

---

37 LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII), p. 14.

38 Ibid., p. 12.

Defective organisation of frontier guards was, according to it, the chief cause of soldiers' quarrels, part of the defects being of communication between the posts provided with insufficient means. The example of the adjutant attached to the Greek covering battalion who left his post at 5 p.m. and arrived at 2 a.m. was cited by the Commission as typical. The task of the soldiers was apparently not only to act as frontier guards but also to act additionally as customs guards, forest guards and field outpost sentries. These men received no specific military training and had no particular qualifications. Their duties were generally irksome and it was well known that only doubtful characters were appointed. "On both sides", the Report says, "the only disciplinary action generally taken is to transfer soldiers punished for causing frontier incidents from one post to another". The length of their stay at one post was cited as another "serious disadvantage from the point of view of morale" [39].

The most significant part of the Report related to the "instructions issued (which) are dangerous in view of the intellectual level of the heads of the posts who are allowed all possible latitude in carrying them out" [40]. The situation was even more dangerous because the Greek instructions were similar to those usually issued to outposts in the field. The posts were armed with automatic rifles, amunition, grenades and pistols. The Bulgarian instructions

---

39 Ibid., p. 5.

40 Ibid. The military in situations where the men use arms (for slight offences such as wood-cutting) incurred no responsibilities.

were apparently even more explicit. "Their posts were ordered to maintain the integrity of the frontier and were entitled to call upon the civil authorities" [41].

The Commission was aware of the fact that Greece possessed the means to organise more than three battalions along the frontier, while Bulgaria could not, within the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly, make such arrangements possible. To improve the situation certain administrative measures were suggested by the Commission, namely to place the frontier troops under civil authorities rather than divisional or Corps commanders. The Commission saw no harm in the fact that "the frontier guard could continue to be under the War Office through the inspector-general, who would be entrusted with its training, equipment and mobilisation" [42].

Furthermore, said the Commission, the sectors of the frontier guards were too large and the headquarters too far back and too distant. Further, "the signalling system is inadequate. All posts ought to be connected with the rear by telephone. This would make the passage of armed bands through this covering sector more difficult ... As a result of emigration and exchanges, the frontier populations are today more homogeneous and that the bands no longer find accomplices as they used to do among their own nationals on Greek soil".

---

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., p. 12.

In order to implement all these recommendations, the Commission considered it necessary that the governments should request the services of qualified neutral officers. "These two officers, who would have to be of the same nationality in order that the reform may be carried out on parallel lines in both countries, be impartial and capable of foreseeing and so averting many conflicts; they would gradually create a more peaceful spirit".[43]

(ii) Measures to limit the consequences of incidents

Failing the above approach, if neutral officers were found unsatisfactory, said the Commission, a consiliation commission should be set up which would be composed of one each from Greece and Bulgaria, two neutral members and one neutral chairman. "Direct conciliation" the Commission felt had failed because of the "natural excitement prevailing at the moment". The appointment of neutral officers[44] was to make these types of negotiations possible. They were to be paid by the two governments and would be attached to the HQ of frontier guards. Appointment was to be for two years subject to extension. In order to provide for these cases where agreement could not be reached, the Commission suggested the appointment of a

---

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

conciliation commission [45].

(iii) Measures to enable the League to take rapid action

The Commission suggested that special facilities should be granted for the use of wireless telegraphy, and priority should be given to such messages in consideration of the fact that urgent telegrams sent to both Bulgaria and Greece were received a day later.

The Report rightly pointed out that "... the saving of a few minutes may prevent a catastrophe. The present circumstances were extremely favourable in that the President of the Council received a telephone message one hour after Bulgaria's appeal had been received by the Secretary-General. A military operation which might have had the most dangerous results was only just prevented. In order to hasten intervention by the League it might be considered whether special facilities for communications and transit could not be granted to governments and to the Secretary-General of the League in case of threat of war. In particular the use of wireless telegraphy and priority messages might be considered" [46].

In its conclusions, the Commission stated that the "measures proposed in the present report may be expected to contribute in a large degree towards reducing the tension between the populations particularly of the frontier. The

---

45 The Commission was to consist of one representative of each of the two parties and a neutral officer. "The Chairman might either be chosen by the neutral officers or appointed in advance on a permanent basis". He was to be selected from among the organisations working in the Balkans which were attached to the League.

46 Ibid.

Macedonian Revolutionary Committee's influence would decrease as it found fewer and fewer supporters. The Greek population would have less to fear from the "Comitadjis" and from the rancour of the Bulgarian population they displaced, as the causes of discontent and grievance disappeared, relations between the two countries - and even as the Balkans as a whole - would become less strained" [47]. It further requested the governments to keep the Council informed and in case of need to apply for assistance.

Even if all these recommendations could have been implemented and both parties agreed to adhere to them, the causes of the conflict could not be removed, for these measures only helped in temporarily putting a lid on them.

---

47 Ibid., p. 14.

2. The Views of the Disputants

In the background of the recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry, when the Council Session opened on 7 December 1925, Sir Austen Chamberlain, the rapporteur, proposed that the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece should first be asked whether they had any observations to make. The Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry should then be invited to add to these observations and comment upon them, after which the Council should adjourn to consider the statements [48].

During this session, the President of the Council was Vittorio Scialoja and Greece and Bulgaria were represented by Kalfoff and Rentis respectively. Below is a brief summary of the views of the Bulgarian and Greek governments on the Report of the Commission of Enquiry.

(a) The Bulgarian View

The main burden of the case that Bulgaria put forward to the Council was that Bulgaria "was a disarmed country" and that the military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly imposed great hardships on her organisation of the frontier guards. The articles concerning the "time-limit" of emigration in the Treaty of Sèvres were equally overburdening Bulgaria with enormous financial problems to rehabilitate and maintain thousands of refugees. The Demir-Kapu incident plus the "Comitadjis" problem on the frontiers, according to Bulgaria, was a pretext used by Greece to

---

48 Council Minutes, Thirty-Seventh Session, Official Journal, (First Meeting, 7 December 1925), February 1926, p. 108.

invade Bulgarian territory. Furthermore, Bulgaria has conformed to the provision of the Covenant and was in no way guilty of disregarding them. She was entitled to reparations and indemnities for violation of her territory.

Except for the appointment of neutral officers on the frontier, on which it had certain reservations, Bulgaria accepted all the other military recommendations of the Commission. Instead of neutral officers, she proposed regular meetings between senior officers of the two governments who would, when necessary, come to an agreement by "diplomatic means". On political recommendations, Bulgaria stated that the cause of the conflict was "disproportion of strength between two countries", making a plea for disarmament. The Bulgarian view as presented by its representative is summarised below.

Kalfoff, the representative of Bulgaria, began his statement by praising the work of the Secretariat and the machinery of the League: "It is everywhere recognised that it was solely due to the promptness with which you set in motion the machinery provided by the League ... that a dispute ... was specially reduced to its just proportions ... An admirable precedent for the settlement of disputes between the states members ... has been created and will no doubt become a permanent tradition to the great benefit of the human race" [49].

Kalfoff said that the conclusions of the Report of the Commission of Enquiry bore out, in all its main points, Bulgaria's version of the incident at Demir-Kapu and

---

49 Ibid.

and subsequent events. "It is now established beyond doubt that an occurrence which served as a pretext for the invasion of Bulgarian territory by the Greek troops was a simple frontier incident ... " [50].

Referring to the charges made by Greece that Bulgaria had violated the provisions of Neuilly by arming the civilians, Kalfoff said that the total number of men involved in the border incident was no more than 1,000.

According to the Bulgarian representative, the preamble to the Treaty of Neuilly was "a dead letter" and Bulgaria's "means of defence were strict minimum". On this subject he disagreed with the opinions of the Commission of Enquiry that the arming of the inhabitants in Demir-Kapu was contrary to the terms of Treaty. Kalfoff maintained that the Council should take into account "the very special circumstances" which led to this situation.

On the question of "Comitadjis", Bulgaria held the view that the question should be submitted to a Commission of Enquiry for investigation. "This was not the first occasion," emphasised Kalfoff, "that the Greek government had accused the Bulgarian authorities of conniving at the formation of revolutionary bands and of allowing them to enter Greek territory". In any case, the Greek government had habitually used the pretext of "Comitadjis" trouble for her own ends, and he cited the Tarlis incident in 1924 as an example.

---

50 Ibid.

Kalfoff stated categorically that the Reports of the Commission of Enquiry and the Greco-Bulgarian Emigration Commission offered no proof of "Comitadjis" activities. "The plain truth is", he said, "that these revolutionary bands to which public support in Greece ascribes everything are in most cases only a fiction serving to cloak certain responsibilities or to justify certain measures of persecution".

On the question of indemnities, Bulgaria produced a long list of estimates of material and moral loss which the country had suffered as a result of Greek invasion. The total estimates of the government amounted to about three times the sum finally arrived at in the Report of the Commission of Enquiry, which was considered "inadequate" [51]. To support his point, the Bulgarian representative said that "no country has suffered so much from the problem of refugees as Bulgaria". There were at the time some 350,000 refugees in Bulgaria. Of this number about one-fifth had emigrated by virtue of the Greco-Bulgarian Convention of 1920. "On the advice of the Great Powers, we have had to offer hospitality to 40,000 Russian and 25,000 Armenian refugees" [52]. Kalfoff reminded the Council that after five years, the Mixed Commission had not been able to obtain the acceptance of the Greek government to evaluate the properties of several thousands of Bulgarian families who had emigrated to Greece. " ... Bulgaria has never been a rich country, and since the wars a considerable part of its modest

---

51 Ibid., p. 109.

52 Ibid., p. 110.

resources has been set aside to meet the obligations imposed by the Treaty of Peace" [53] .

Bulgaria showed reluctance to accept the Commission's recommendation on the appointment of neutral officers to supervise the frontier posts. It suggested instead that the matter should be settled by "diplomatic means" between the two governments and "it is only in the event of disagreement that the chosen bodies of the League or the Military Attachés of the Great Powers"should be invited. However, the neutral officers would be acceptable to Bulgaria if they were "entrusted with the choice of site of installation of new frontier posts" and belonged to the same nationality on both sides.

On the question of prolongation of the "time-limit" of emigration of Bulgarian refugees under Articles 3 and 4 of the Treaty of Sèvres, the Bulgarian government agreed with the findings of the Commission. In its view, these articles should be abrogated and indemnity paid to the owners who abandoned their property since the situation had fundamentally changed with the arrival of refugees from Asia Minor. On the period of declaration of emigration provided for in the articles, Bulgaria felt that there would be no qualitative change in the attitude of those who had refused earlier requests for liquidation. The implication of Kalfoff's speech was that if for four years Greece had not granted their requests, it was highly unlikely that it would do so after a certain time.

---

53 Ibid.

On the subject of military recommendations, Bulgaria had certain definite views. In principle, the Government accepted them and thought they could be put in force. The only condition which seemed relevant from its point of view was that the posts on the frontier should be so placed that neither of the parties would get what Kalfoff called "topographical advantage". The proposal to reduce the number of posts was, in the present conditions in the Balkans, he said, "a very rash proceeding".

The solution for diminishing future incidents lay, in the opinion of the Bulgarians, in "changing the mentality in the Balkans". Realising perhaps how difficult it is to change "mentality" of nations, Kalfoff said: "We are convinced that any system which tended to diminish direct contact between the commanding officers of the two services will have the result of reducing their responsibility. The essential thing is to cultivate a disposition on both sides of the frontier towards good relations" [54].

Kalfoff ended his speech by stating that incidents more grave than the recent affair at Petritch have arisen in the Balkan frontiers in the past. The Bulgarian Government was convinced that the adoption of the measures recommended by the Commission of Enquiry would render the repetition of such incidents very difficult, but that peace and tranquillity in the Balkans "will only be finally assured when the disarmament required under the Treaty of Peace has become a reality".

(b) The Greek Case

After Bulgaria had presented its case to the Council, Constantine Rentis, the representative of Greece, rose to

---

54 Ibid., p. 111.

speak. He also began by paying homage to the Council's work. "The Council by its resolution adopted in Paris has rendered a considerable service by entrusting the Commission of Enquiry to investigate the general causes which give rise to incidents between the two countries. The roots of the evil must be discovered in order to find the remedy".[55]

The Greek representative said that Greece has "unreservedly accepted the proposals of the Commission concerning military recommendations, including the proposal to appoint neutral officers".

The Greek Government, on the other hand, relied mainly on the non-observance by Bulgaria of the military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly, producing evidence to prove the point. For its own actions, it offered a plea of "self defence" to combat regular "Comitadjis" danger to its main lines of communication.

In support of the argument that Greece was justified in having recourse to "coercive measures" to compel Bulgaria to pay reparations and withdraw its troops, Rentis quoted the opinion of the legal experts approved by the Council on 13 March 1924: "Coercive measures which are not intended to constitute acts of war may or may not be consistent with the provisions of Articles 12 and 15 of the

---

[55] Ibid., p. 112.

Covenant and it is for the Council when the dispute has been submitted to it to decide immediately, having due regard to all the circumstances of the case and to the nature of the measures adopted, whether it should recommend the maintenance or the withdrawl of such measures" [56].

In any case Greece wanted formal declarations of Bulgaria's intention to implement the military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly and argued that the "question of economic outlet" to the Aegean Sea should be considered settled by another treaty to which Bulgaria was a signatory, i.e. the Treaty of Lausanne. Greece, on the other hand, was entitled to reparations for the loss of its captain and other soldiers.

In the main, Greece welcomed the proposals of the Commission of Enquiry regarding establishing a demilitarised zone and the appointment of neutral officers but challenged the Commission's competence to decide on a sum of indemnities without giving Greece a hearing. It was ready to seek an opinion on this question from the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The historical survey of the refugee problem formed the centre of his speech. On several points of fact, as was to be expected, the version of Greece differed from that of Bulgaria [57]. On this point, Rentis produced facts and figures compiled by the Greek government. In 1905, after

---

[56] LON, Document (C.A. 214/11) Rentis also quoted Sir Eric Drummond's definition of "coercive measures", which according to him "begin with seizure of postal bags and end with occupation of territory and the institution of pacific blockade".

[57] Ibid., p. 113.

persecution in Bulgaria, some 100,000 refugees went to Thessaly; in 1920, 60,000 Greeks were in Bulgaria, of whom 54,500 presented requests to the Mixed Emigration Committee and 49,000 in fact migrated. He further presented figures to show that both before World War I and the Balkan wars, several thousand Greeks and Bulgarians had presented petitions to liquidate their property. The Greek government proposed the strengthening of the existing Emigration Commission to carry on its work. However, it accepted the proposal of the Commission of Enquiry concerning the extension of the "time limit" to emigrate.

Rentis told the Council that Greece was merely asking Bulgaria to respect the provisions of the Treaty of Neuilly. He alleged that there existed in Bulgaria three depots of arms, and that according to the Greek intelligence service movements of infantry and artillery took place in August 1924 in the Samokovo and Ritsa District, south of Sofia. Furthermore, he accused Bulgaria of maintaining military air forces, employing heavy field artillery and concealing infantry and cavalry units as police units.

However, the most important allegation from the Greek side was about the occupation by the Bulgarians of the railway line for a distance of 6 kilometres, it being Greece's only line of communication with the eastern frontiers of Macedonia and Thrace. The cutting of this communication meant cutting off Greece and endangering mobilisation on the Eastern frontier. Relying on the Commission's Report on the measures taken in the interior of Macedonia, Rentis justified these actions. He disagreed with the Commission's findings that the military situation was stabilised on 21 October, and pointed out that the Bulgarians had occupied the heights of the Struma Valley

while the Greeks were still at the foot of the hills [58].

Rentis then came to one of the main causes of friction between the two countries which was completely omitted in the Commission's Report. This was the question of the economic outlet to the Aegean Sea envisaged in Article 48 of the Treaty of Neuilly [59]. Rentis said that "unofficial replies from Sofia have rejected this offer" [60] and that "Bulgaria is not merely claiming an economic outlet, but a veritable corridor".[61] In support of his argument Rentis quoted an article written by the British Under-Secretary of the State for Foreign Affairs in The Times [62] in which the author is purported to have said that "the rejections of offer to go to the League showed Bulgaria desired acquisition of territory. He then referred to the Treaty of Sèvres which also stipulated that the question of an outlet to the Aegean should be regulated by the League. The fact that Bulgaria had shown no desire to seek the co-operation of the League suggested, in his opinion, that Bulgaria was using this "as a pretext for putting forward various claims at the expense of Greece" [63].

---

58 The total casualities cited by the Greeks on that day amounted to one soldier and one civilian killed and one officer and one soldier wounded.

59 For text see Chapter II.

60 See statement of Kalfoff to this effect in the League Assembly, in Official Journal, February 1926, p. 192.

61 Ibid., p. 112.

62 The Times, London,4 August 1923.

63 Ibid., p. 113.

From the point of view of general policies of the two countries, Rentis sought to convince the Council that Greece sought peace and observance of the Treaties, whereas Bulgaria used the question of economic outlet to serve as a basis for territorial claims. He attempted to pose the question dramatically: "If war broke out between the two countries, who would be the aggressor ?" "Who again", he asked, "would have been the aggressor if the last incident had not been closed by the intervention of the League ?" [64]. To prove that Greece had no warlike intentions, Rentis stated that Greece was disarmed, recalling "that the flower of her youth was lost in Asia Minor". [65].

To prove Bulgaria's non-observance of the Treaty, Rentis quoted a letter written by the Conference of Ambassadors to the Bulgarina Minister of Foreign Affairs, alleging violation of the military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly. The letter stated that "the Allied Governments are unanimous in their determination not to allow such breaches" [66].

The Greek representative then passed on to another form of argument. He asked the Council: "If a state infringes near to its frontier, the military clauses of its contractual obligations, has not the other state the right to defend itself, while recognising that it should not go beyond purely defensive matters ?". In support of this point,

---

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.

66 This letter was written in persuance of the complaint by the Military Inter-Allied Commission of Control in Sofia that Bulgaria was resisting the execution of military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly and that inter alia, Article 71 of the Bulgarian constitution relating to compulsory military service had been abrogated. In this connection, see LON, Letter from the Conference of Ambassadors to the League, dated 23 May 1923, in Document (C.A. 214/II).

Rentis quoted a letter from the Greek Refugee Establishment Commission and the provisions of the Locarno Treaties. The letter dated 19 November, 1923 addressed to Rentis also mentioned other points omitted by him. The most significant point being that the question of the security of the frontier villages - those that were within practically striking distance of the frontier line - is in essence a question of effective suppression of the "Comitadjis". The whole economic life of these areas was absolutely dominated by the "Comitadjis".[67]

Rentis said that the Council Resolution asking Greece to pay reparations should be amended, adding that Greece "did not contemplate committing acts contrary to the

---

[67] LON, Letters from the President of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission to the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 19 November, 1923, (Document C.A. 214/II).

stipulations of the Covenant" [67].

Finally, he demanded that the indemnities of twenty million levas recommended by the Commission of Enquiry be set aside, and that instead Greece should be paid 50 million drachmas as reparation. Rentis insisted that Greece was the first to be attacked; besides, the Commission of Enquiry had never invited Greece before arriving at this huge sum of indemnity. "No one can be condemned without a hearing". He held the views that the Council alone is competent to deal with this matter". Greece then threatened to go to the Permanent Court of International Justice on the ground that the sum for indemnity had been fixed without consulting it. Rentis ended his statement by adding: "If we had been able to follow the example of the Great Powers, any incident would be transformed into a question of detail, and would be settled between the states themselves without the intervention of the League" [68].

---

68 LON, Official Journal, February 1926, p. 117.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DECISION OF THE COUNCIL

1. The "Committee of Three"

During the Thirty-Seventh Session of the Council in December 1925, after hearing the case of both sides, Sir Horace Rumbold, the President of the Commission of Enquiry, made the point that the conclusions of the Commission were unanimous and that 'he did not in any way desire to modify its report' [1]. The Bulgarian representative, Kalfoff, replied to some of the points raised by Rentis in connection with the access to the Aegean sea and observance of the military clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly. Kalfoff reminded Rentis that the Greek government had earlier, on 16 December 1925 in Paris, agreed in advance to accept the Council's decision [2].

Rentis then took the floor and asked the Council whether the Bulgarian government could make a formal declaration to the effect that it accepted the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne on the question of an outlet to the Aegean. The President of the Council replied that "if a state signed a treaty, it accepted the clauses of the treaty; that was an understood thing".

The Greek representative would have wished to continue to discuss the problem of Bulgaria's violation of the Treaty of Neuilly, had not Sir Austen intervened to make a proposal to the Council which was to prove of

---

1 Council Minutes, Thirty-seventh session, Official Journal, February 1926, p.117.

2 Ibid.

considerable help in getting out of the impasse. He asked the Council to create a Committee of three members to examine the Report of the Commission and the statements made by both the parties. He felt that "the consequences which the decision of the Council might have for what might be called the jurisprudence of the League of Nations were so important that he would be glad to have the assistance of his colleagues in preparing the Report for the Council ...". Two members, in addition to Sir Austen, were nominated and accepted by the Council for this purpose: they were Viscount Ishii from Japan and Paul Hymans from Belgium. Together with Sir Austen Chamberlain they constituted the "Committee of Three" [3].

The Report of the Commission of Enquiry was examined by the "Committee of Three" appointed by the Council on 7 December 1925 [4]. This procedure was adopted partly to gain time, as the Greek government showed reluctance to accept the decision of the Commission on indemnities[5].

---

3 See Proposal by Sir Austen Chamberlain, Council Minutes, Thirty-seventh session, Official Journal, February 1926, p. 118.

4. Second Meeting, Council Minutes, Thirty-seventh session, 7 December 1925. Official Journal, February 1926, p. 118.

5. Statement by the Greek representative, ibid., p. 117.

In a private session held four days later, under Sir Austen's chairmanship, an attempt was made to persuade Greece to accept the decision of the Commission of Enquiry.

From the discussion at the private meeting and the memorandum[6] already prepared by the League Secretariat on "Sanctions", it is clear that both the Rapporteur, Sir Austen, and the Secretary-General, Sir Eric, were doubtful that the Council would succeed in persuading Greece.

The memorandum consisted of two papers prepared by the Legal and Economic Sections under the names of Sir Arthur Salter and Van Hamel dated 9 and 17 November 1925. The former contended that in this instance (i.e. the Greco-Bulgarian conflict) the sanctions under Article 16 were not applicable and that instead the Council should take "action" under Article 11. By way of action, Sir Arthur suggested a "naval demonstration", taking into consideration the fact that this could raise a problem with the United States, whose ships would also be effected. The latter recommended military (including naval) action based on the interpretation of Article 10. Sir Eric's opinion was in favour of Van Hamel's proposal, adding that League action should always be based on specific articles of the Covenant and that "in case of a real peril to world peace, the use of economic weapons in preference to any other is one of the essential basis of the Covenant" [6a].

---

6 LON Archives, The Greco-Bulgar Incident, "Sanctions", File No. 47177.

6a For difficulties of application of Sanctions, see W. Schiffer, L'article 16 du Pacte la Société des Nations, Son interprétation à la lumière de sa genèse, Geneva Research Centre, 1938.

To attempt gentle persuasion and leave some area of diplomatic manoeuvrability in the hands of the League, the minutes of this private meeting were kept 'confidential' [7], and not circulated to other members of the Council. Amomg those who were present at this meeting, apart from the members of the "Committee of Three", were three members [8] of the Commission of Enquiry and its President, Sir Horace Rumbold. The Contending parties were kept outside. Rentis was invited to attend the meeting briefly when the question of appointing a conciliation commission was considered.

The main discussion revolved round the "principle of territorial invasion" and appointment of the neutral officers or the Conciliation Commission and indemnities. Opening the discussion, Sir Austen Chamberlain reported Greek government's annoyance concerning the amount of indemnities. He emphasised that the Greek objection to not having been consulted could not be considered, since the Greek government had clearly accepted the Commission's authority in advance. He maintained that if Greece violated the principle of territorial integrity, indemnities were clearly justified, although he added that Greece may have been perturbed about the initial incident and taken hasty steps.

Paul Hymans intervened at this point to ask whether the amount of indemnities fixed by the Commission could be reduced; in his opinion the Greek government was unduly burdened with the refugee problem and could not afford

---

7 LON Archives, Procès Verbaux of Meeting under Chamberlain, 11 December 1925, File No. 48370.

8 The only member of the Commission of Enquiry who was unable to attend was Drooglever Fortuyn. ibid.

to pay such a substantial sum. To this Sir Horace replied that he had in his possession a report published by the British Treasury to the effect that the Greek budget that year had increased to $ 20 million. Sir Austen found it difficult to accept the fact that Greece was unable to pay $ 45,000, which was no more than a mere half per cent of its national budget. He added that immediate indemnity must be paid to the victims.

On the difficult question of reorganising the frontiers between Bulgaria and Greece, Sir Horace Rumbold suggested to the meeting that it would be useful if Sweden could give to the Council the benefit of its experience on that issue.

Paul Hymans then asked: "Why not Poland ?". To this the Secretary-General commented that the countries which had stayed out of the war were perhaps more qualified for that purpose, and added that since Sweden [9] had recently reorganised its frontiers, its experience should be helpful. Sir Eric suggested two names of Swedish nationality to serve as neutral officers [10] on a special mission to Bulgaria and Greece. No one appears to have raised any other objection.

---

9 On this point see LON Archives, Letter from Osten Undén, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden to Sir, Eric, dated 21 October 1925, File No. 47177, in which the former offered help to the League on any such question. Also it may be recalled that Sweden was the first to inform the Secretary-General of the incident at Demir-Kapu.

10 Procés Verbaux of Meeting under Chamberlain, op.cit.

As discussed later, the question then arose as to who should nominate the President of the Conciliation Commission - the Council or the Neutral Officers ? [11]. This question was not to be solved for a long time. Sir Eric took the view that the two neutral officers nominated by the Council should propose the President, preferably someone connected with the League.

When the question of the appointment of a Conciliation Commission was being discussed, the Greek representative briefly joined the meeting. The point was whether the frontier guards should be under the Ministry of War and at what point of time the superior officers should meet if there was a border incident. The Greek representative accepted the view of the Commission of Enquiry that the Conciliation Commission should intervene only if the Superior Officers did not agree. Rentis also accepted the proposition that on the complicated issue of liquidation of refugee property there ought to be a special Protocol between the two countries.

A brief discussion took place on the issue of the "time limit" within which the neutral officers were under an obligation to meet. The Bulgarian government had proposed thirty-six hours, and the Greeks only six; the Council then compromised on twenty-four [12]. That was simple enough.

---

11 Ibid., and LON Archives, Nomination of Two Swedish Officers with a view to Assisting the Reorganisation of the Frontier Guards, File No. 48599.

12 See Sir Austen's Report, in Official Journal, February 1926, pp. 172-178.

Rentis took this opportunity of again raising the issue of the indemnities which Greece was asked to pay. His point was that if the Commission of Enquiry played the role of an arbitrator, Greece should have been consulted before the amount was fixed. To a direct question by Rentis of whether the Commission "played the role of an arbitrator", Sir Horace replied that "for reasons of time" it had not been possible to consult Greece. Furthermore, if the Commission had referred the matter to Greece, there would have to be verification of estimates on both sides which would have held up the ultimate decision. He said that if the claims had been referred to Greece, the outcome would have been a long quasi-judicial procedure "which would doubtless have led to acrimonious discussions contrary to the spirit of the Resolutions" [13].

---

13 Ibid.

2. The Report of the Council

The Report on the decision of the Council was submitted by the Rapporteur, Sir Austen Chamberlain, on 14 December 1925, in public session [14]. At that time, the President of the current session was Vittorio Scialoja of Italy. The Report was proposed as a Resolution by the "Committee of Three", i.e. Great Britain, Japan and Belgium.

In view of the importance of the Report, which in fact was the formal embodiment of the Council's decisions on this question, its substantive points may be quoted here at length. The Report stated: "... We note that a sum of 20 million levas has been fixed as the amount of compensation which the Greek government is to pay to the Bulgarian government, in respect of movable property carried away, but not restored to its owners ...". "... When addressing the Council the Greek representative complained that the Commission had neither submitted the details of the Bulgarian claim to the Greek government for examination nor ... its finding on this point ... The representative of the Greek government complained in effect that his government had been condemned without being heard".

"We are satisfied that the Commission acted correctly and after full consideration. Neither the Greek nor the Bulgarian representative at the Council meeting in Paris objected to the time limit within which the Commission was

---

14 Twelfth Meeting, Council Minutes, Thirty-seventh Session, 14 December 1925, Official Journal, February 1926, pp. 172-178.

o present its report, nor was there anything in the erms of the resolution appointing the Commission which deprived it of the general right to regulate its own procedure".

"Further, the Commission arrived at the decision not to submit the claim to the opposing party for reasons which in the circumstances of the case appear to be incontrovertible. It was of the opinion that to do so would not be compatible with the spirit of the resolution ... which aimed at preventing any dispute in regard to indemnities ...".

"We invited the Commission to consider the (Greek) statement and to inform us whether it afforded any ground for revising its decision ... We are of the opinion that the award of the Commission was fully justified" [15].

After this statement, the Rapporteur proposed that all the recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry should be adopted. The proposal included the indemnity of ten million levas for material and moral loss and twenty million for compensation to be paid "within two months". After restating the conclusions of the Commission of Enquiry vis-à-vis the question of Greek military action in Bulgarian territory, the Report continued:

---

15 Ibid., p. 173.

"Apart from the wording of the resolution which shows that the Council comtemplated the payment of such indemnities or reparations as might be considered appropriate, we believe that all the members of the Council will share our view in favour of the broad principle that where territory is violated without sufficient cause, reparation is due, even if at the time of the occurrence it was believed by the party committing the act of violation that circumstances justified the action ... " [16].

As far as the military recommendations were concerned, Sir Austen proposed two modifications in the Report of the Commission of Enquiry: one concerned the question of the frontier guards which both governments wished to place under civilian authority, and second concerned the time limit within which the junior officers should meet in case of an incident. The resolution [17] proposed "a maximum delay of 24 hours, as agreed earlier in the private session.

To avoid future incidents, the Report suggested that since 'direct conciliation on the spot' frequently failed, 'neutral officers of the same nationality should be appointed'. The Report went further and suggested that if agreement was not reached with the aid of the neutral officers, a conciliation commission should be established consisting of representatives of the two parties, that is, an officer belonging to the frontier

---

16 Ibid.

17 LON Archives, Procès Verbaux of Meeting under Chamberlain, 11 December 1925, File No. 48370.

guards and the neutral officer. "This commission would be presided over by a third person, chosen in advance, whose appointment would be permanent" [18]. The neutral officers were to complete their mission after two years. According to the report, they were also to make recommendations to the Council on the question of nominating a chairman.

"To shorten the inevitable period of friction, the Report considered the general causes of the conflict and recommended that both governments should hasten the process of liquidation of property under the Convention on Voluntary Migration (1919). On the complicated question of refugees of Bulgarian origin who came from Greece and claimed the right to real property under Articles 3 and 4 of the Treaty of Sèvres, Sir Austen Chamberlain proposed that since their land has been used by Greek refugees from Turkey, the Bulgarians should be compensated "for the value of property they left behind them".

Sir Austen's report proposed the solution of the refugee problem in this way. "We are of the opinion that the Council should urge the Greek government ... to take all possible measures to give satisfaction to the refugees in question ... the two governments should be invited to give their serious consideration, invoking for its solution the assistance of the Commission on Voluntary Emigration, and that they should be requested to make a report to the Council at its next session ..." [19].

---

18 Ibid., p. 174.

19 Ibid., p.175.

It is interesting to note that there were no comments from any other Council member. Only one representative spoke, Paul Boncour of France. Supporting the report, he emphasised the need for granting "special facilities for communications to representatives of the League of Nations instructed to make an enquiry into incidents which arose" [20].

Throughout the discussion on this case, other members of the Council did not actively participate. Since most of the crucial decisions had been taken in private session, and the public meeting were used merely as a formality to confirm the decisions taken earlier.

Finally, when the Resolution [21] on indemnities was proposed, the claims of the Greek government to reduce the amount were also rejected.

The Report was unanimously adopted. It only remained for the interested parties, Kalfoff and Rentis, to make statements of assurance of loyalty to the Covenant. Thus ended the Greco-Bulgarian dispute before the Council of the League in Briand's words:
"Throughout this affair which ends in so fortunate a manner, there is neither victim nor vanquished. There are two nations, which, forming part of the same great family, have shown their desire for conciliation by agreeing immediately to accord to reason and justice the last word in the dispute

---

20 This was one of the points that was referred to the League's Advisory and Technical Committee for Communication and Transit by Chamberlain's Report. ibid., p. 176.

21 For the text of Resolution, see ibid.

in which they are engaged" [22].

On 17 December 1925, Sir Eric received a letter from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "The Greek government, appreciating the humanitarian motives which have inspired the League's decision in the Greco-Bulgarian dispute and strictly faithful to the League's noble ideals of peace, accepts this decision in its entirety, in spite of the disappointment that it causes to the Greek government. The government of the Republic's profound esteem for the Geneva organisation has induced it to "renounce any reservations, however legitimate" [23]. The letter continued:
" ... It is convinced that this decision will constitute a precedent which in future everyone will have to follow and will help to consolidate peace in the Balkans within the framework of existing treaties".

In a long telegram sent by the Agence Bulgare to the Secretary-General, it was announced that the Council's decision was applauded in the Bulgarian Chamber of Deputies. The telegram paid tribute to the Council stating that a precedent to regulate incidents had been established which would have world-wide significance and hoping that the countries of the Balkans would learn a lesson from recent events. The Bulgarian Prime Minister, Tsanoff, considered that the decision of the Council was "La solution équitable".

---

22 Official Journal, February 1926, p. 1711.

23 This letter was accompanied by an Aide Mémoire showing the amount that Bulgaria owed to Greece under Article 121 (war reparations) of the Treaty of Neuilly. Text in LON Archives, Documents submitted by the Greek government, File No. 48130.

He added that Bulgaria "nurished the hope that in this 'high institution' justice and equity would reign" [24].

---

24 Sofia, 16 December 1925. Document (C.826. 1925. VII) or LON Archives, Speech of Council President in Bulgarian Parliament, File No. 48380.

3. Contemporary Assessment of the League's Success

The handling of this dispute by the League was nearly everywhere acclaimed as a great initiative for the world organisation. It may be of some interest here to describe the contemporary reaction of the world press.

"Encore une guerre arrêtée",[25] that is how the 26 October Council Resolution which gave an ultimatum to Greece and Bulgaria was received. The causes and consequences of League action were analysed later by writers, but the immediate impact on public opinion was that the settlement of this dispute was regarded as a triumph for the League. Some attributed it to the newly created machinery under the Covenant, others to personalities such as Briand and Chamberlain, who conceived of the Resolution, and still others to a new spirit in Europe. Despite this enthusiasm of the press, the basic dilemma is posed and reposed throughout the rapportage, and that concerned the big question. Would the Council act the same way, if the dispute concerned a Great Power?. The Corfu incident was still fresh in the memory for a positive answer to be given.[26]

---

[25] H. Duchosal, La Société des Nations, L'Association suisse pour la SDN, Genève, 1927, p. 29. The author discussing various conflicts before the League, concludes that the Greco-Bulgarian instance was "a successful venture of the League", a classical precedent in the history of the Council.

[26] According to James Barros, the Corfu Incident was the first occasion during which it became clear that the League could not operate successfully without Great Power agreement. The Corfu Incident of 1923. Mussolini and the League of Nations, Princeton University Press, 1925.

The New York Times reporting on October 31,1925 headlined the Council Resolution thus: "League Jubilant over Balkan Peace - Tribute to Wilson - Precedent to avert War", revealing that "Blockade Plan was ready" and that "Powers were prepared to coerce Greece" [27].

Its editorial comment stated that "the rapidity and firmness with which the Council had dealt with what might otherwise have developed into a new Balkan War has made a good impression everywhere (especially in the United States)" [28]. The Times likewise emphasised the speed with which the League had acted: "This time the world in general cannot reproach the League for the inefficiency of its authority and action. Its record for this incident is quite a striking one. Bulgaria made an appeal on the 23rd, Council met on the 26th, on the 27th Greece promised to evacuate and by the 29th evacuation was finished" [29].

"L'Europe nouvelle" published a comment on the same day on the dispute stating that the solution was proof enough of the efficacy of the machinery. "Il vient d'être

---

27 See note 6.

28 Earlier the same newspaper had welcomed the intervention of the League in these words. "... that guns are still booming in other parts of the globe does not affect the main fact that assurances of lasting peace have been created in central Europe where lay the greatest danger of another world conflict ... Such disturbances as those in Macedonia no longer have a repercussion in Europe. The Balkans have ceased to be a powder mine and at worst an explosion there can be localised".

29 London, 30 October 1925.

prouvé que la machinerie de Genève n'est pas aussi lourde et lente qu'on le prétendait, et qu'elle fonctionne sans défaut. Même les esprits les plus confiants et les moins sceptiques accueilleront cette preuve avec soulagement" [30].

The New York Times submitted that it was not the machinery but the way it was utilised by the Great Powers that had brought about the desired result: "There are those who see in the handling of the Bulgar-Greek quarrel a clear development in League procedure. Friends of the League have always held that it represented a machine which could or could not be used seriously. This time it was ... "The meeting it added, would up happily with a series of speeches and mutual congratulations".

The reason why the machinery was successfully used this time was also given: "Success was not due to moral suasion - England and France meant just what they said when they sent word to the Greeks to get out of Bulgaria in 60 hours" [31].

Another newspaper, the Journal de Genève, rejoiced at the decision of the Council, but added an objective warning. "Nous nous en réjouissons très vivement ... mais c'est oublier que dans dans l'affaire de Corfou l'action du Conseil s'était trouvée paralysée par celle de la conférence des ambassadeurs. L'incident Gréco-Bulgare a été la première occasion pour le Conseil d'agir Seul, librement conformément au Pacte. Et l'on a pu constater que le Pacte fonctionne parfaitement".

---

30 Paris, 31 October 1925.

31 New York, 27 October 1925.

After paying this tribute to the Covenant and the machinery of the League, the newspaper went on to conclude that the resulting decision of the Greco-Bulgare dispute was in no way different from what might have happened even if the old methods were used by the concert of Europe. "On dira encore qu'en face de la Grèc et de la Bulgarie, le concert européen avec ses vieilles méthodes aurait abouti au même résultat, que l'action rapide et digne d'éloges de la Roumanie aurait suffi. Peut-être d'avant guerre aurait, en quarante-huit heures, réuni en un seul lieu les ministres des affaires étrangères de France et de Grand Bretagne et les représentants de tous les états intéressés"[32].

The Daily News was a little more cautious, while explaining the fact that Briand's exhortion to Bulgaria and Greece had been timely. It added that "prompt legal intervention is of course open to the criticism that what the League is willing to do to a weak member like Greece it shrank from doing in the case of a leading power like Italy" [33].

---

32 Geneva, 27 October 1925.

33 London, 27 October 1925.

4. The Implementation of the Decision

The decision taken by the Council was thought to have established a precedent for the future. In particular the Council [34] had disallowed the plea of "self defence" on the principle that if that plea was established in the minds of states members of the League it may "lead to extremely painful conflicts involving serious consequences"[35]. The fact that the Council had hinted at a possible resort to Article XVI indicates that this was considered a case of armed hostilities by one member against another. Though Greece declared that it had "no war-like intentions", the fact that it had penetrated into Bulgarian territory made the incident a 'de facto war'[36]. The Council, in considering the Greek military action, came to the conclusion that Greece had violated the obligations under the Covenant and had "resorted to war". For this violation, the Council decided to impose indemnities on Greece. This is perhaps the only case in the history of the League where a member-state was so penalised [37].

---

34 LON, Pamphlets on the League of Nations, No. 278, p. 19.

35 Statements of Briand and Chamberlain, Official Journal, November 1925, pp. 1714 - 1715, and The Times, London, 29 October 1925.

36 On this point, see Kotsch, The Concept of War in Contemporary History, Geneva, 1956, p. 245.

37 See Knudson, op.cit. The author considers the Greco-Bulgarian incident as "unique" in the history of the League, p. 82.

In its Resolution of 14 December 1925, the Council had attempted to find solutions to the immediate consequence of the incident as well as to the deeper causes of the conflict (see Part I). It proposed indemnities and reparations for damages following from the incident, and it also appointed neutral officers to be replaced by a Conciliation Commission to rationalise frontier posts and requested the Mixed Greco-Bulgarian Commission to expedite the resettlement of refugees. As discussed below, the Council was much more successful in finding solutions to the immediate consequences of the conflict than in resolving the deeper causes of the conflict between the two neighbouring states.

(a) Indemnities and Reparations

The Commission of Enquiry, in its recommendations, made a distinction between indemnities and reparations, and proposed that Greece should pay reparations "for loss of life, for the wounded and for the material and moral damage" [38], amounting to 10 million levas; it was further proposed that indemnities should be paid for the principal losses [39] suffered by the inhabitants of the villages, who "had been under the fire of the Greek troops" [40], amounting to 20 million levas. The total sum of 30 million levas was to be paid by Greece "within two months of the Council Resolution" [41].

---

38 LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C.727. M. 270. 1925. VII) p.8 and Payment of Indemnity to Bulgaria, Document (C. 17. M. 63. 1926. VII).

39 These included clothing, bedding, agricultural implements and military equipment.

40 LON, Report, Commission of Enquiry, Document (C. 727. M. 270. 1925. VII).

41 For text of Resolution, see Official Journal, February 1926, p. 173.

The Greek government "begged the Bulgarian government, in view of the difficult financial situation of Greece" [42], to agree to an arrangement whereby only half the sum was paid on 15 February and the other half on 8 March, 1926 [43].

(b) Reorganising the Frontier

(i) Neutral Officers

In pursuance of the Resolution of 14 December 1925, two agreements were signed on 8 February 1926 between Bulgaria, Greece and Sweden. These "arrangements"(as they were referred to later) [44] appointed two colonels,

---

42 Letter from Bulgarian Chargé d'affaires in Berne to the Secretary-General of the League, Berne, 15 February 1926, Official Journal, April 1926, Annex 851 C, p. 584 or Document (C. 79. M. 39. 1926. VII).

43 Letter from the Bulgarian Chargé d'affaires in Berne to the Secretary-General of the League, Berne, 8 March 1926, Official Journal, April 1926, p. 585. Document (C. 170. M.63. 1926. VII).

44 Signed by Vlachopoulos and Popoff for Greece and Bulgaria and Osten Undén, the Foreign Minister of Sweden. For details of the two arrangements between Sweden and the two governments, see LON Archives, Nomination of Two Swede Officers with a View to Assisting the Reorganisation of the Frontier Guards, File No. 48599, and Correspondence between Boheman and Abraham, ibid., and Official Journal, April 1926, Annex 850, p. 581.

Siefvert and Lindh to introduce frontier reforms in Bulgaria and Greece "on parallel lines".[45] The duration of their assignment was two years during which they could cross the frontier "at any time". During this period, the Neutral Officers were under an obligation to report to the Council on the frontier situation.[46] They were to be members of the Conciliation Commission together with Greek and Bulgarian officers, and their salaries were to be paid by the two respective governments. From Salonika, they were supposed to supervise the rebuilding of frontier posts "at a minimum distance of 500 meters". After a year's stay, the Neutral Officers formulated "Provisional Instructions"[46a] in which they set out the

---

[45] After the arrangements were signed between Sweden and the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece, a controversy arose as to whether the Neutral Officers were to be maintained by the individual governments or the League. In this connection, see Report of Guani, Representative of Uruguay, to the effect that their appointment constituted "work undertaken by the League". Council Minutes, Thirty-Eighth (Extraordinary) Session, Official Journal, April 1926, p. 506. See also the comment of the Legal Section of the League that the salaries of the Neutral Officers should be refunded by the governments concerned, since the Council's approval was required to place funds at their disposal. The financial arrangements were finally made on 15 March 1926 by the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece, Council Minutes, Thirty-Ninth Session, Official Journal, April 1926, p. 580.

[46] The purpose of these arrangements was to provide a neutral authority to implement the Military recommendation of the Commission of Enquiry. LON Archives Procès Verbaux of private meeting of the Council, 11 December 1925. File No. 48369.

[46a] The report is entitled "Stipulation jugée susceptible de faire disparaître ou de limiter les causes générales des incidents de la frontière et ses motifs", LON Archives, Documents submitted by the Neutral Officers on a special mission to Bulgaria and Greece, File No. 61482.

reforms that were necessary. In their various communications to the Secretary-General, they noted the difficulties of supervising the frontier zone "where the soldiers considered each other as their natural enemies" [47]. With minor reservations, both Greece [48] and Bulgaria [49] accepted these regulations.

(ii) Conciliation Commission

The Neutral Officers, under the Council Resolution (14 December 1925), were to constitute a Conciliation Commission consisting of Greek and Bulgarian officers and themselves, the President of the Commission to be recommended by the Neutral Officers "from among persons belonging to

---

47 In a letter to the Secretary-General, the Neutral Officers stated that the regulations were "not sent to the posts; the chiefs do not know what to do ... the officers know only half the stipulation ..." LON Archives, Confidential Correspondence respecting Prolongation of the Neutral Officers Appointed to Assist in the Reorganisation of the Frontier between Lindh, Siefvert and Abraham, File No. 61169.

48 Letter from the Greek Ministry of War to Col. Lindh, Athens, dated 4 November 1926, in Documents submitted by the Neutral Officers on a special mission to Bulgaria and Greece, op.cit. General Kimissis, Commander of the 9th Division at Drama, said in an interview that Greece would abide by the Regulations: "... à la frontière règne le plus grand calme. On pourrait dire même que nos postes frontières sont superflus ..." Le Progrès, Athens, 26 April 1926.

49 Documents submitted by the Neutral Officers on a special mission to Bulgaria and Greece, op. cit.

organisations working in the Balkans attached to or in relation to the League of Nations" [50] and appointed by the Council on a permanent basis. The main reason of giving this task to the Neutral Officers was that the Great Powers and the Bulgarian and Greek governments could be suspected of partiality [51].

On 16 September 1926, at the forty-second session of the Council, the Neutral Officers reported to the Council that "they had been unable to find a suitable person for the Office and asked for a postponement [52]. They suggested that the President should be appointed after two years when they would be replaced by Officials of the two governments. Furthermore, the authority to decide on "compensation payable for damage in case of an incident" [53] should rest

---

50 Report by Sir Austen, Appointment of the Chairman of the Conciliation Commission on the Greco-Bulgarian Frontier. Letter from the two Swedish officers placed at the disposal of the Bulgarian and Greek governments. Official Journal, October 1926, p. 1403. For text of letter, see ibid., p. 1420.

51 LON Archives, Letter from Major Abraham to Colonel Siefvert, Confidential Correspondence btween Abraham and Neutral Colonels, File No. 53837.

52 Letter from Colonels Lindh and Siefvert to the Secretary-General, dated 4 September 1926. Official Journal, October 1926, p. 1420.

53 Letter from the two Swedish Officers dated 24 August 1927 and submitted to the Council on 22 September 1927. Official Journal, October 1927. Annex 992, p. 1476 - 1477.

with the Conciliation Commission.

When these proposals were presented to the Bulgarian [54] and Greek [55] governments, their replies were identical. They both accepted the suggestion of replacing the Neutral Officers by their officials but rejected the proposals for appointing a President. According to the Bulgarian government, the "good neighbourly relations existing between Bulgaria and Greece make it unnecessary to maintain special organs any longer, while the Greek government offered financial reasons for rejection. The Council in its meeting on 22 September 1927, during the Forty-Seventh Session proposed, in a resolution that the "Council should for the present refrain from appointing the President of the Conciliation Commission" [56].

(iii) Another incident

Exactly nine months after the Neutral Officers had been in Greece and Bulgaria, news came of new border incidents one in Thrace between Komotini and Dedeagatch (Alexandroupolis) and the other in Karadéré, Sapsi region thirty-five kilometres north-west of Dedeagatch [57].

---

54 Letter from Minkoff to Sir Eric, Berne, 19 September 1927, Question of Nomination of a President for the Conciliation Commission for the Greco-Bulgarian Frontier, Official Journal, October 1927, Annex 992a, p. 1477.

55 Ibid., Annex 992 b.

56 See Report by Earl Onslow, Substitute British Delegate, Official Journal, October 1927, pp. 1417 - 1418.

57 The incidents occurred between 30 April and 4 May 1926. LON Archives, Confidential Correspondence between Swedish Officers and Abraham, File No. 51817.

The telegram concerning the first incident was sent by the Neutral Officers on 30 May 1926 to Sir Eric, stating that "the incident near Komotini was in the process of being stopped" [58]. According to documentary evidence, the incident arose when the identity card of a soldier was being used by another soldier on leave. The Bulgarian soldier during his interrogation gave the above story, while the Greek soldier said that he saw from ten metres that the Bulgarians were armed with guns. The documents, with verbatim reports of the evidence given by witnesses, were sent by the Bulgarian government to the Secretary-General of the League on 7 June 1926 [59].

When the first incident occurred, the Greek government requested Colonel Lindh to "proceed to the spot" and present a report to the League [60]. This request was forwarded to

---

58 Ibid.

59 Information released by the Bulgarian authorities. The enquiry was conducted by the General Staff of the Infantry Regiment and the 10th battalion at Hoskao on 29 May 1926. The Bulgarian soldier involved in this incident, named Kip-Kireff, belonged to Post No. 9. Total casualties in this incident were one Greek and two Bulgarians killed. ibid., Annex No. 7.

60 Letter from Colonel Lindh to Abraham, dated 15 May 1926 in LON Archives, Confidential Correspondence between Swedish Officers and Abraham, File No. 61169.

the Secretariat.[61] The question arose as to whether the Komotini incident was within the "terms of reference" of the 14 December Resolution of the Council. Paul Mantoux, the Director of the Political Section, recommended to Sir Eric that both the report of the Neutral Officers and the relating documents should be sent to both governments but should not be circulated to the Council unless both governments desired it.[62] The documents were transmitted to both governments with a marginal comment by the Political Section: "of no special interest." A few months later, it was revealed that Sir Eric through the intermediary of Sugimura, a member of the Political Section of the League, had made arrangements between Sweden and Greece to stop the occurrence of any such incidents. Sugimura is supposed to have stopped in Belgrade, where the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nintchitch told him: "Réglez l'incident, réglez-le vite et n'en laissez pas de trace ...".[63]

What follows is significant in the records of the League Secretariat. The Secretary-General, accepting the procedure, commented: "I am glad that ... (during the incident) the killed Comitadjis were no longer Bulgarian soldiers. A story to the contrary had got some credence."[64]

---

[61] Letter from Abraham to Colonel Lindh, dated 20 May 1926, ibid.

[62] Letter from Paul Mantoux to Swedish Officers, dated 22 June 1926, ibid.

[63] Ibid., 22 June 1926.

[64] Ibid., 23 June 1926.

refugees were to apply for the liquidation of their immovable property ought to be extended [65]. Under Articles 3 and4 of the Treaty of Sèvres, the last date for deposit of voluntary declaration was to be 24 December 1925 [66]. At the Private Council meeting session, Rentis had agreed on behalf of his government that the extension would be acceptable. Later, the Greek delegate to the Greco-Bulgarian Mixed Commission, C. Xanthopoulos confirmed this arrangement in a letter to the President, John Campbell, extending the period for another four months [67].

The implementation of this part of the recommendations of the December Resolution turned out to be a slow and hazardous process, and the Council was to be occupied with its "progress" until 9 December 1927, when another agreement

---

65 Text, 14 December 1925, Council Resolution, Official Journal, February 1926, p. 175 and Execution of the Council's Recommendations of 14 December 1926 in Official Journal, February 1927, Annex 929 b.

66 For text of Articles, see Chapter VII, n. 36.

67 LON Archives, Procès Verbaux of Meeting under Chamberlain, 11 December 1925, File No. 48370. See alo communiqué published in Official Gazette, Sofia, No. 193, on 25 November 1925, according to which the "time limit" for deposit of declarations of Bulgarian emigrants from Greek Macedonia and Thrace was extended to 15 December 1926.

between the two countries was signed [68]. When the Resolution was adopted, Sir Austen had said that "this was the final scene in a series of Council discussions dating from 1925". But this was not to be the end of the problem, for the financial complications arising out of the agreement were submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice on 8 March 1932 [69].

(c) Sequel to the Refugee Problem

But here we may briefly follow the progress of this particular political recommendation of the Commission of Enquiry concerning the liquidation of the refugees' immovable property. The question came up on the Council's agenda, inter alia, at the thirty-ninth [70], Forty-first [71] Forty-fifth [72] and Forty-seventh [73] Sessions under the item "Greco-Bulgarian Question: Report on the Progress

---

68 For the text of the Resolution, see Agreements relating to Greco-Bulgarian Emigration, Official Journal, February 1928, p. 182.

69 P.C.I.J., Interpretation of the Greco-Bulgarian Agreement of 9th December 1927 (Caphardaris-Moloff Agreement), Series A/B. Advisory opinion. No. 45. 24th session, March 1932. pp. 68-91.

70 Council Minutes, Official Journal, October 1926, p.1426.

71 Council Minutes, Official Journal, April 1926, Annex 851 b, p. 183.

72 Council Minutes, Official Journal, July 1927, p. 776.

73 Council Minutes, Official Journal, October 1927, pp. 1112-1113.

effected in the execution of certain recommendations made by the Council on 14 December 1925, concerning Refugees".

During March [74] and September 1926, [75] Sir Austen reported to the Council on the "progress" made on the recommendations. The text of this Resolution was brief. It said: "The Council thanks the governments of Bulgaria and Greece for their reports, takes note of the progress made up to date of the Council's recommendation and requests the two governments to keep it informed of the further development of the programme approved last December".

Meanwhile, communications which were being received by Sir Eric directly from the governments did not indicate much progress. On the contrary, the Bulgarian government made complaints of "delay" in drawing up and adopting the scale of valuations of property [76].

Up to 1 July 1926, the Greco-Bulgarian Commission received requests for liquidation of property from 15,589 Greeks and 18,623 Bulgarians. The refugees whose rights

---

74 Council Minutes, Thirty-Ninth Session, Official Journal, April 1926, p. 507.

75 LON Archives, Extract from Minutes of the Fifth Session, Discussions at the Forty-first Session of the Council, September 1926, File No. 53919 or Document (C. 529. M. 202. 1926. II).

76 LON, Letter from the Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires to Sir Eric, Berne, dated 6 September 1926, in document (C. 528. M. 201. 1926. II). See also in this connection Letter from Bulgarian Chargé d'Affaires to Sir Eric, Berne, dated 8 March 1926 and Letter from Greek Legation to Secretary-General, Geneva, dated 14 March 1926, both in document (C. 141. 1921. VII), and P.C.I.J., The Greco-Bulgarian "Communities", Advisory Opinion No. 17. 31 July 1930, Series B. pp. 33 - 36.

to property were recognised tripled to 8,221 in Greece and 1,992 in Bulgaria.[77]

The Mixed Commission on Greco-Bulgarian Emigration had fixed a definite scale, which according to its President, Campbell, had been arrived at by experts and was an "equitable assessment". In order to hasten liquidation, the Mixed Greco Commission established several sub-committees in Macedonia, Thrace and Bulgaria. The Greek government was asked to display "special good-will" in hard cases which ought to be given the benefit of the doubt [78].

By May 1927, of a total of 40,000 claims on both sides only one-tenth had been liquidated [79].

The report presented to the Council at its Forty-Seventh session in September 1927, for the first time

---

77 LON Archives, Letter from Xanthopoulos to the President, 6 September 1925, File No. 536391, Annex II, and LON Archives, Information on Actual State of Liquidation of Goods of Refugees by Greece and Bulgaria to Sir Austen, 10 June 1926, File No. 52208.

78 LON Archives, Letter from Sir John Campbell to Sir Eric, File No. 53639.

79 Council Minutes, Forty-seventh Session, Official Journal, October 1926, p. 1112, and LON Archives, Extract of Minutes of Five Meetings, 22 September 1927, File No. 62012.

accepted the fact that the work of "liquidating properties"[80] was progressing slowly and that "a very small number of emigrants had received the compensation to which they were entitled and in consequence an excusable feeling of discontent had arisen". This report also contained details of the security, redemption, cash payment and fixed term payments given to the Greek and Bulgarian emigrants [81].

This time when the report came before the Council, it passed a Resolution of one sentence: "The Council approves the report of its Rapporteur".

Both Greece and Bulgaria had serious financial difficulties which further complicated the liquidation of the property of emigrants. A further arrangement between the two countries became necessary in order to facilitate the reciprocal emigration of minorities under the Voluntary Emigration Convention signed in persuant of Article 56 of the Treaty of Neuilly. On 9 December 1927, a financial agreement, known as "Caphandaris-Molloff" was concluded at Geneva to implement the terms of Article 56 [82]. Greece

---

80 Ibid.

81 In this connection see Report by the Mixed Greco-Bulgarian Commission, 27 August 1927, ibid., pp. 1221-1224. The financial report was approved on 15 September 1927. Official Journal, October 1927, p. 1134.

82 For text of Agreement and Letters addressed to the Council by the Ministers of Finance of Bulgaria and Greece. Official Journal, February 1928, pp. 241, 245. Annexes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

took this opportunity to raise the question of the debt owed to it by Bulgaria under Article 121 of the Treaty of Neuilly. According to the article Bulgaria owed a part of the two-and-a-quarter milliard gold francs as reparations to the Allies.

The question of financial settlement between the two countries had become so complicated that in anticipation of the conflicts that may emerge, an important clause was inserted in the Caphandaris-Moloff Agreement. Article 8 of the Agreement provided that any difference as to the interpretation of its clauses should be settled by the Council of the League of Nations by a majority vote.

To give an indication of the complicated arrangements for payment an example may be taken from the Agreement, one of the operative Clauses of which stipulated that "... "to the extent that an emigrant was not paid in cash, he was to be given bonds of the country to which he had emigrated, instead of bonds of the country to which his property had passed" [83]. The government which had issued the greater amount of bonds to emigrants was to pay half-yearly, to the other government, the equivalent of interest and sinking funds upon the bonds representing the debit balance. Bulgaria had issued larger amounts of bonds,

---

83 For the discussions and financial agreements, see Council Minutes, Forty-eighth Session, Official Journal, February 1928, pp. 182, 243, 244 and Ladas, op.cit., pp. 307 - 324.

and hence Greece was obliged to make half-yearly payments.

On June 20, 1931, when President Hoover proposed that "all payments of the inter-governmental debts, reparations and relief debts" be postponed for a year (known as the Hoover Moratorium) the then Greek Premier Veinzelos put forward a solution to Bulgaria. He suggested that "Hoover-Plan be equally applied to Greek debts due to Bulgaria under the "Caphandaris-Moloff" Agreement.

The controversy involved the right to suspend these payments as a set off against reparation suspended under the Hoover Moratorium [84].

The Bulgarian Government then decided to submit the question to the League Council for settlement. The Committee of experts to whom this matter was submitted for interpretation declared itself incompetent "to determine whether the debts were inter-governmental" [85]. The Council in turn "requested the Permanent Court of International Justice whether there was, in fact, a dispute between Greece and Bulgaria under Article 8 of the Caphandaris-Moloff Agreement, and if so, to give an advisory opinion on the

---

84 For a full discussion, see A.K. Kuhn, "The Greco-Bulgarian Inter-governmental Debts and the Hoover Moratorium", American Journal of International Law, Vol. 26, 1932, pp. 572 - 4.

85 See Greco-Bulgarian Emigration: Request of the Bulgarian Government, dated 7 August 1931, concerning the Execution of Caphandaris-Moloff Agreement and Resolution dated 19 September 1931. Council Minutes, Sixty-fifth Session, Official Journal, December 1931, p. 2262.

nature of the obligations arising out of the said Agreement" [86].

The Court answered the first question by saying that Greece's right to subject her acceptance of the Hoover Plan to a condition had nothing to do with the Agreement. It also decided that the Council's powers under Article 8 of the Agreement were restricted to the interpretation of the Agreement itself and did not extend to the Hoover Plan [87].

---

86 P.C.I.J., Interpretation of the Greco-Bulgarian Agreement of 9 December 1927. Advisory Opinion Series A/B, Fasc No. 45, 8 March 1932, pp. 85 - 87.

87 The Court in its opinion handed down on March 1932 decided that "there is no dispute between Greece and Bulgaria under Article 8". Ibid.

PART III

CONCLUSIONS

Chapter IX. Conclusions

In a mere matter of months, intervention by the League of Nations had registered an important success, not only in preventing the spread of hostilities but also in settling the more immediate consequences of the dispute between Bulgaria and Greece. True, the word "success" should be used with qualifications. As discussed at length in Part I, the causes of the conflict in the Balkans had a long history, and it was hardly to be expected that the League could identify and eradicate them in such a short time. The League was created for a more limited role - prevention of conflicts between nations from erupting into armed hostilities. In this limited sense, there is no doubt that the League's intervention was completely successful. The hostilities between the two countries ceased, the Greek troops were withdrawn and indemnities were paid. And some steps were initiated - e.g. the appointment of neutral officers to redefine the location of frontier-posts, and of the Commission for the settlement of refugees - towards formulating the solution of the deeper causes of the conflict between the two countries.

Sir Austen Chamberlain, who acted as a Rapporteur during the dispute, may perhaps have exaggerated the extent of the League's success. With pardonable pride, he described this success as striking and suggested that the incident was just one of those"which fifteen years ago would probably have involved the whole of the Balkans in the war" [1].

Any armed conflict usually contains in itself the seeds of a wider conflict. This could take many forms: a longer

---

1 Pamphlets on the League of Nations, op.cit., No. 278, p. 18.

and more bitter fight between the initial combatants, its spread to neighbouring states and finally the planned or accidental involvement of the Great Powers. Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that none of these took place. This obviously raises the question concerning the reasons for their not happening.

The reasons for war as well as for peace are not easy to decipher. Many elements are intertwined in an uncanny way in the whole process; they include faith and fear, knowledge and ignorance, wisdom and stupidity, calculation and chance, planning and mishap and so on. These elements are usually present in any situation of a drift to war or to peace, and the possible combinations are too numerous to permit precise conclusions.

The rapid settlement of the dispute between Greece and Bulgaria through the intervention of the League represented, as subsequent events were to show, a unique episode belonging to a specific period. The events as they unfolded on the world stage thereafter - dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay (1928-1938), the Sino-Japanese war (1931-1933), the Italian-Ethiopian conflict (1935-1936), the Spanish civil war, the rise of National Socialism in Germany to power - demonstrate clearly that the same League of Nations, instead of becoming stronger in its intervention with the passage of time, was in fact to prove increasingly helpless in face of a decisive drift towards an eventual world war. For this reason alone, it would be rash to attribute the success of the League in the Greco-Bulgarian dispute to the inherent strength of the League machinery for peaceful settlement or to the European powers permanently renouncing resort to war as an instrument of national policy. If this were so, there would have been no second World War. The success in this instance was thus clearly related to a

specific combination of circumstances.

There were indeed a number of possibilities inherent in the situation: the conflict would have served as the initial spark to ignite a world war, as had happened less than a decade-and-a half before, or on a more limited scale it would have drawn in the other powers in the Balkans. More importantly it could have led to a much wider clash between the two parties to the dispute. Or, at the very least, the conflict would have simmered on in an unsettled form between the countries. It would be helpful to take up each of these eventualities in some detail to see why none of them resulted from that particular incident at that period.

We may begin with the worst possibility, of the incident leading to a world conflict. Such a conflict requires the presence of at least two major powers on the world scene, one of which wants to maintain the status quo but the other one is a serious challenger to the existing balance of power. In the world of the mid-twenties, there was no such challenger. France and Great Britain were working together as far as possible to maintain the existing arrangements [2]. Germany was disarmed and in the midst of

---

2 Briand and Chamberlain were supposed to have created a "perfect confidence" between France and Britain. "Neither side presented impossible conditions or sacrifices to the other. The only victory was that of peace over war". The Times, London, 19 October 1925.

chaos. The United States had withdrawn within a "shell of semi-isolationism". Both Italy and Japan had not yet established nationalist governments which were to present their demands to change the established political boundaries. The wounds of war were yet too recent to be forgotten. The armament expenditures of the Great Powers were at its lowest level in this period [3]. And the League Council had in fact by its resolution of 12 December 1925, established the Preparatory Commission of the Disarmament Conference, which had begun discussions aimed at a universal limitation and reduction of armaments [4].

An idea of the general mood of Europe may be obtained from the fact that after strenuous debates, the Locarno Treaties were concluded on 16 October 1925, only three days before the shooting at Demir-Kapu. The day of their signature was considered "to mark a decisive point in history for the peace of Europe and possibly the whole world"[5]. The main architects of the Treaties, Aristide Briand and Sir Austen Chamberlain, were both hailed with cries of "Vive la Paix" in Paris[6]. And The Times, assessing

---

3 For detailed comparative figures, see M.M. Sloutzki, The World Armament Race, Geneva Studies, Vol. XII, No. 1, July 1941, p. 20.

4 See Official Journal, February 1926, pp. 164-170. During December 1925 under the Assembly Resolution of 27 September 1924, a convention was also signed to control international trade in arms, ammunition and implements of war. Official Journal, August 1925.

5 Statement by Sir Austen in a press conference after the signature of the Locarno Treaties, The Times, London, 19 October 1925.

6 In a speech in the House of Commons, in which Sir Austen referred to the Locarno Treaties and said that it would be difficult to point to any other agreement that had "effected so much", cited in Austen Chamberlain, The Chamberlain Tradition, London, 1937, p. 187.

Chamberlain's contribution, suggested editorially that "peace seems now more nearly assured than it has been for a generation" [7]. The newspaper commended him on 21 October 1925, on the award of his knighthood. At the same time, Le Figaro demanded that the Nobel Peace Prize should be presented to Briand: "Les accords de Locarno représentent le couronnement de la politique de M. Briand, qui depuis cinq ans occupe à la fois de combler les lacunes des traités créées par absence de la garantie anglo-américaine et de consolider sa véritable armature" [8].

Similar feelings were reflected in the New York Times editorial of 25 October 1925 entitled "Pessimism is disappearing". It said that: "the long orgy of pessimism, an after-war neurosis is disappearing", and listed the positive developments all round such as, less unemployment in Great Britain, increase in foreign investments, France prosperous to a high degree, Germany recovering rapidly, Italy improving, Austria and Hungary making progress, Rumania developing industries and oil exports, and Scandinavia making steady improvement in trade and production.

In such a euphoric atmosphere, it was hard to imagine any major state undertaking a war. A contemporary commentator, A.C. Coolidge, summed up the mood of the time when he declared in an article in Foreign Affairs that Europe was "moving forward and not backward"; and he added that Europeans have grown so averse to war that "even the maintaining of necessary troops by voluntary enlistment is not as

---

7 The Times, London, 21 October 1925.

8 Le Figaro, Paris, 21 October 1925.

easy as it used to be" [9]. Sir Eric Drummond, the Secretary-General of the League, was moved to say that "no nation today wishes to declare war upon another. Measures of force involving hostilities may be undertaken, but technically there is no war" [10].

In such an atmosphere in Europe, whether the League was there or not, there was clearly no Great Power which was interested in using the Greco-Bulgarian conflict of 1925 as an excuse for pushing other powers towards an open armed conflict. In this sense, then, the European setting in the mid-twenties lacked the essential elements of a world conflict. And it would therefore be stretching reality to the breaking-point to suggest that the League succeeded in preventing a world war at that time.

Reasons of a not altogether dissimilar nature were operative for containing the war in the Balkans. The other countries in the Balkans were in no position at that time to take sides in an armed conflict to further their national interests or to remedy their national grievances. It was not even easy to imagine the much longer continuation of the conflict for the simple reason that one of the parties to the dispute, Bulgaria, was nearly disarmed and had thus no means of continuing the fight. Bulgaria was thus clearly interested in rapidly moving towards a peaceful settlement. It would seem on the other hand that such an intent is not easy to establish for the Greek government. The Greek invasion of Bulgaria was the result of a combination of circumstances. The Greeks had the military capacity, and some reasons springing from domestic instability and the military dictatorship as described earlier, for carrying the conflict further. The question of the League's

---

9 A.C. Coolidge, "Ten Years of War and Peace", Foreign Affairs, 15 September 1924, pp. 13 - 21.

10 Pamphlets on the League of Nations, op. cit., No. 286, p. 16.

success therefore consists essentially in making a recalcitrant Greece accept the fact that its troops should be withdrawn and that it should pay damages to Bulgaria for direct destruction and for the act of aggression.

There was of course the general Locarno spirit; and the European statesmen were not prepared to have their major handiwork destroyed by some national irritation of a little country far away in the south of Europe. Bulgaria's appeal to the League for the settlement of the dispute had produced in France a great deal of sympathy, bordering on admiration [11]. But this was not enough to dissuade Greece from the adventure. It is at this point that other measures, beyond public persuasion, contemplated by the major powers in the League become important.

There was serious consideration by the Great Powers of the use of economic sanctions through the League. The League Secretariat had already prepared basic position papers on the subject [12]. The documents in the archives of the Foreign Ministry of some of the countries concerned show that this was not an empty threat [13]. The French Minister in Sofia had cabled Briand to bring the proposal to the attention of the Italian and the British governments. The proposal was that after appointing Neutral Officers, the next immediate step should be to grant a mandate to a

---

11 See Gérando, op.cit., pp. 26-27.

12 As explained earlier the detailed papers concerning sanctions were prepared in the League Secretariat by Sir Arthur Salter and Van Hemmel, each of whom was the Director of the Economic and the Legal Sanctions respectively.

13 Barros, op.cit., pp. 372-373.

Great Power to "blockade the Aegean Ports". The British Minister in Sofia also envisaged economic blockade and informed the United States counterpart that "should the Greeks refuse the arbitration of the League, his government stood ready to utilise their Mediterranean Fleet in order to bring them to their senses". If this was not clear enough, the British Minister further added that all "the work of Locarno would appear futile, and Britain had no idea of allowing that to take place".

The summary of the official sessions of the Council as well as of the minutes of the private meetings in which this coercive method of persuasion (that is, sanctions imposed through a naval blockade) was discussed, do not contain any details on how or when the decision was arrived at. Thus we do not know who was its original author nor can we ascertain the precise procedure of making the decision and the methods envisaged to implement it. It can only be surmised that the proposals were discussed in the corridors of the Palais de Chaillot in Paris on 27 and 28 October 1925, but for understandable reasons they were not formally set down in official records [14]. This surmise is based on the impressions and opinions recorded by those who were directly responsible for guiding the decision of the Council, i.e. Sir Austen Chamberlain, Aristide Briand and Sir Eric Drummond. Here was a classic example of successful behind-the-scene diplomacy by this Grand Trinity of the League.

---

14 This was not the usual procedure. As Sweester remarked, Geneva became the most important meeting place in the world "not only for what was actually done in formal session, but perhaps even more for what took place 'off the record'". The First Ten Years of the League of Nations, 1930, p. 35.

In the light of the above, it is not difficult to see why the Greek government, when informed of the possible line of action by the Great Powers, had practically no alternative but to moderate its earlier attitude of defiance and to agree to the solutions proposed by the Extraordinary Session of the League. Greece was only a small country. The record of its army during the first World War and during the campaigns against Turkey was not such as to permit its present leadership to defy the Great Powers. Its extensive coastline and its maritime dependence made it highly vulnerable to the pressures of vastly superior naval powers. Its internal situation, with the profound conflict between the monarchy and the army, on the one hand, and the popular republican sentiments, on the other, was highly unstable. And to top it all, it was economically dependent on the Great Powers for loans and other forms of aid [15]. A Greece, so weak, so small, so exposed, so divided, and so dependent, could hardly be expected to defy single-handed the near-unanimous wishes of the League. Here, in a nutshell, was the key to the League's success.

The first presentation of the background before explaining the League's success in this particular incident would perhaps be incomplete without reference to the men who played a dominant role in bringing about the settlement. Among the many persons who played an important role in this dispute, the most important role, surely, belonged to Aristide Briand, the President of the Thirty-Sixth Extraordinary Session of the League's Council, Sir Austen Chamberlain, the Rapporteur of the Session, and Sir Eric Drummond the Secretary-General of the League. The

---

15 See the Settlement of Greek Refugees, Protocols of 29 September 1923 and 15 September 1927, in Documents (C. 524. M. 187. 1924. II) and (C. 556. M. 198. 1927. II).

successful exercise of personal diplomacy in this incident owed much more than has been usually recognised to the unique combination of personalities in this Grand Trinity of the League. As a token of recognition of their services in the cause of peace, two of them; Aristide Briand and Sir Austen Chamberlain shared the Nobel Peace Prize in April 1926 - a high tribute to the importance of their work. It is of interest to look at each of them a little more closely.

We may begin with Briand. A few days before the Demir-Kapu shooting, he had put his signature to the Locarno Treaties as his country's Foreign Minister. His personal ascendency at that time was of great importance. From then onwards, he occupied several ministerial offices, including that of "Président du Conseil". He was later co-author of the famour Briand-Kellogg Pact, a Treaty for the Renunciation of War in 1927, which was considered a major point of departure in history.

He had become the "impersonation of the ideal of pacific settlement and raised the moral prestige of the League, as long as he was President of the Council or member of it" [16]. In assessing his role in the Greco-Bulgarian dispute, a staff member of the League, Sir Arthur Salter, who knew him closely, described him as"the apostle of conciliation with Germany; of friendship with Great Britain; of internationalism of Locarno, the Pact of Paris, The League of Nations and the United States of Europe" [17].

---

16 Shotwell and Selvin, op.cit., p. 6. Also Reymond Hesse, Aristide Briand (Premier Européen), Paris, 1939, p. 244. In Le Figaro, Briand was commended as possessing the qualities of an ardent persuader, cited from Huge Sellan in Chamberlain, op. cit., p. 165.

17 Sir Arthur Salter was then in 1925, Director, Economic Section, League of Nations. See his Personality in Politics, London, 1948, pp. 198-199.

But perhaps Briand's own narration of the event in Demir-Kapu and the subsequent convening of the Extraordinary Session of the League Council is even more revealing. This is how he described the incident.

"One evening, in my office, ... a cable informs me of the emergence of a new conflict in Europe. Two nations have already come to grip: the Greeks and the Bulgarians; the sounds of machine-guns and rifles can be heard. In this state of general insecurity then prevailing, should one not fear to the world such a threat? As Chairman of the Cabinet, I decide without delay to convene the Ministry in Paris. The following day, it is held. The two nations called to the bar are invited to break contact, to immediately cease the hostilities, they accept beforehand the decision of the Council. War stopped - it did not break out again." [17a]

The second personality who contributed to ironing out in successive meetings the several difficult issues in this conflict was Sir Austen Chamberlain, who was at that time the British representative to the League, and who was appointed Rapporteur during the Greco-Bulgarian Dispute.

[17a] Cited in Hesse, op.cit., p.244. It is interesting to note, however, that the recent biography of Briand does not accord much importance to his rôle in the Greco-Bulgarian dispute. Under the title of "Médiation de Briand", Achille Elisha reproduces the telegram sent to Greece and Bulgaria to cease hostilities with the following comments: "Un incident très banal entre soldats à moitié ivres qui en vinrent aux mains. Les soldats grecs envahirent les régions bulgares voisines de la frontière et au cours des rixes un soldat grec fut tué. L'affaire prit, par la suite, une importance exagérée". In Aristide Briand: discours et écrits de politique etrangère, 1965, pp. 152-153.

As mentioned earlier, together with Briand, he was looked upon as a great peace-maker, particularly because of his role in the Locarno Treaties. Sir Austen had great faith in the efficacy of League machinery and regarded the articles of the League Covenant as "a great step forward".

Although a representative of one of the Great Powers, he was believed to have had considerable sympathy towards the small powers - a view which equipped him admirably to play the role of mediator in disputes, particularly among the latter. On this question, he himself had expressed his position quite clearly. On Demir-Kapu he stated: "... that the Council had shown its power to act rapidly in a crisis and the incident itself and the decision taken by the Council established a precedent which may have far-reaching results if a similar dispute should ever again arise" [18].

The faith he had in the existing machinery of the League is expressed thus: "No one who has carefully watched the birth and growth of the League can fail to notice that from the very beginning there has been a continuous under-current of jealousy of the position ascribed by the Covenant to the Great Powers ... Within the League all states are equal ... the assent of the least is as necessary as as the assent of the greatest" [18a].

As a trained diplomat, he was free of exaggerated views about the role of the League, but he was practical enough to emphasise the significance of the few cases where

---

18 Pamphlets on the League of Nations, op. cit., No. 286, p. 19.

18a Ibid., p. 24.

the League had played a decisive part in averting a wider conflict. This is clear from the manner in which he posed the following question:

"Supposing the League stopped 50 per cent of possible wars - and the percentage is infinitely higher - would it not be worth while and will any reasonable man or women condemn it because it may have failed in a few difficult and exceptional cases ?" [19].

The third important personality whose influence was felt in the most difficult stages of the dispute, i.e. the conduct of the private meetings (where in fact pressure to conciliate was exerted on Greece) was Sir Eric Drummond[20], the League's Secretary-General. Much has been written about the relevant articles of the Covenant from which he derived his authority. Not only was his post as a Secretary-General of the League unique in the sense that he was the only person named in the Treaty of Versailles, there did not exist any precedence or criterian on the basis of which his role could be defined [20a].

Hence, in the first years of the League, his status was somewhat vague, but he played a major role 'behind the

---

19 Ibid., p. 11.

20 Sir Eric was in office from 1920-1932. For the evolution of his office, see Viscount Cecil, A Great Experiment, London, 1941, p. 89.

20a The first Secretary-General was named in the Annex; the appointive process of Article VI did not apply to him and he in turn appointed members of his staff.

scenes' [21]. He did not address the Assembly, although he spoke in the Council as secretary to various Committees. The best description of the atmosphere of the first few years pertaining to the role of the Secretary-General is given in the following citation by J.V. Wilson, according to which Sir Eric introduced into the international field "certain of the principles of the British Civil Service ... his reflexes were those of the Civil Servant tempered and modified by the psychology of one who belonged" [22]. A fuller explanation and analysis of the role of the Secretary-General and his chief preoccupation in persuading both the British and the French governments of the utility and existence of the League is found in Jean Siotis' essay on the International Secretariat [22a]. According to the author, the choice of the first Secretary-General itself indicated the type of diplomatic instrument the Great Powers wished the League to be. It was the basic indifference of the Great Powers during the first few years with which they regarded the League which resulted in the type of administrative organisation it was to become.

---

21 For comparison with the role of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, see S.M. Schwebel, The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Cambridge, 1952, p.6. Also Howard-Ellis, op.cit., p. 163, n.2. Also Articles VI, XI, XV, The Covenant, op.cit., Records of the Assembly, Plenary Session.

22 "Problems of International Secretariat", International Affairs, London, Vol. XX, 1944. Sir Eric Drummond in an address delivered in Geneva on 13 August, 1929 "The Secretariat of the League", Public Administration, Vol. IX, No. 2, April 1929, p.31.

22a See author's Essai sur le Secrétariat International, Publications de l'institut Universitaire de haute études Internationales, No. 41, Genève 1963, p.51. For a detailed discussion on the relations of the Secretariat with the Member States of the League particularly Sir Eric's method of communicating with governments, see pp. 79-84, also Pablo de Azcárate, "L'affaire des îles Aland: un conflit arbitré par la communauté internationale", La Tribune de Genève, 27 February 1929, p.17.

In contrast to the view of Sir Austen that "within the League all states are equal", Sir Eric recognised the difference between the Great and the Small Powers in the League, but he was inclined to think that the latter were in reality in greater need of the League's services. The following passage provides a fairly good idea of Sir Eric's own attitude:

"Do not let us mix up voting power and influence. Obviously, a great power, with all its responsibility, must and does exercise more influence in League deliberations than a small power. On the other hand, a small power has an interest equal to that of a great power ... In fact such interest may often be greater, because a small power is more exposed to pressure and violence from its neighbours in time of war" [23].

Sir Eric Drummond (then Lord Perth) when interviewed later on 3 January 1951, by S.M. Schwebel concerning the League's role in settling disputes, the office of the Secretary-General and finally the attitude of the Great Powers, described the atmosphere of the League before 1933 as being quite different from what it was afterwards and said that at that time "the countries were really anxious to secure a just settlement of any political dispute that arose", and that the influence of the Great Power was exerted to that end "[24]

---

23 Pamphlets on the League of Nations, No. 286, p.7.

24 Also his statement in Glasgow University in 1926, in which he discussed the problem of Greek refugees. Pamphlets on the League of Nations, No. 278, p.2, and Pablo de Azacárate, "A l'occasion de l'affaire de Corfou, en 1923 l'opinion publique a exercé pour la première fois une influence directe en faveur de la paix", in the Tribune de Genève, 19 September 1967, p.13.

His own assessment of the Greek-Bulgarian dispute after the lapse of years was that "the atmosphere of the Council at the time was most conducive to rapid solution" [25].

On the role of the Secretary-General in the process of settling disputes, he described himself as being "neither a parliamentarian nor a politician" and thought that the Secretary-General's political activities were known to only a few. He gave instances of the type of political activities he indulged in referring to this particular case in these words: "An international dispute had arisen. The delegates of each of the powers concerned had made strongly ex parte statements before the Council. The delegate of the power which we knew to be wrong came to see me privately and acknowledged the guilt of his government. He asked me if I could not find an honourable way out. I asked the delegate of the other power ... by separate interviews. We gradually worked out a solution which was acceptable and which was approved by the Council" [26]. When Sir Eric stated that "we gradually worked out a solution ..." he made a typical British understatement of his own role in the dispute. From the moment the Bulgarian appeal was brought to the attention of the Secretariat, Sir Eric discreetly took certain initiatives that were decisive in moving towards a solution.

On 23 October 1925, it was Sir Eric who communicated urgently to the Foreign Office in London that it was

---

25 Pamphlets on the League of Nations, No. 286, op.cit.

26 Cited in Schwebel, op.cit., p.8. Although Sir Eric did not mention the incident by name, the author got the impression during the interview that it must have been Demir-Kapu, for in Schwebel's opinion, the League's "interposition" in Demir-Kapu was a striking instance.

extremely important for Chamberlain, the British representative to attend the Extraordinary Session [27]. As discussed earlier, Chamberlain in his capacity as British representative and rapporteur was to play a crucial part in the settlement. Furthermore, while sanctions under Article 16 of the Covenant were being considered in a private meeting, it was Sir Eric who had proposed to the Directors of the Political and Legal Sections, to prepare memoranda on the subject [28]. His comments on the above memoranda are revealing. In it he says: " ... I feel that theoretical discussions on possible future action might be largely academic. Each occasion, in which questions of sanctions arise will present circumstances peculiar to itself which will therefore require special treatment ... There is, however, one general point ... which is worth underlining, namely that in the case of a situation of real peril to world peace the use of economic weapon in preference to any other is one of the essential bases of the Covenant"[29].

On no other point except on the positive use of sanctions under Article XVI did the three personalities project their differences so clearly. The main question was how to deal with Athens if the Council's request to withdraw troops was rejected. Sir Eric proposed that the first action should be the withdrawal of diplomatic representatives while Briand contended that the Council

---

27 Barros, op.cit., p.43

28 Papers of Sir Arthur Salter and Van Hammel on "Sanctions". op.cit.

29 Memorandum of the Secretary-General, ibid.

"should act more strongly and decisively". Chamberlain on the other hand wished action within the framework of the articles of the Covenant and considered the application of economic sanctions an unnecessarily strong action.

The important point, however, is that despite the different approaches of the three personalities towards the solution of the dispute, they acted collectively within the League of Nations, for the main reason that the mutual political interests of the Great Powers outside the League happened to coincide in avoiding a military involvement at that point of time. This factor, in turn, is reflected in the willingness of the Great Powers to act collectively through the existing machinery, i.e. the Council of the League. But inside the League the question could be posed in another way: Who were the parties involved and what was the nature of their dispute ? . The negative criteria could be that if one of the parties to the dispute is not a Great Power and the political interests of the Great Powers do not conflict at that period of time, a dispute has the potentiality of being settled by pacific means. Like a numbered lock, various combinations must coincide to open the door for peaceful settlement.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. SOURCES

A. Unpublished : League of Nations Archives

In the League of Nations there are altogether 108 files under the series 11/-47177 relating to the Greco-Bulgarian conflict, of which 6 are marked "Confidential". Documents consulted include those that were submitted by both the Greek and Bulgarian Governments to the League of Nations. Others relate to Resolutions passed by the Council during 36, 37, 45 and 46 Sessions, Minutes of the Political Committee sitting in private sessions during these sessions, Draft Report of the Special Commission of Enquiry appointed by the League and various letters and telegrams exchanged between governments and the Secretariat on the subject. The most relevant of these are given below under separate file numbers. To this must also be added the documents from the Public Record Office (London) listed under "Bulgaria (Foreign Relations) Greece, 1925". The most relevant of these documents are Nos. C. 13582/13626/13705/13667/13789 and 13309.

(1) Briand's Telegram Exhorting Two Governments Not to Take any Military Action. File No. 47300.

(2) Arrangement for Extraordinary Session on 26 October, 1925. Texts of telegrams sent by Président Briand. File No. 47292.

(3) Resumé of Bulgarian and Greek Thesis made on basis of Information received by the Secretariat. File No. 47570.

(4) Note on Sanctions which it might have been necessary to apply. 9 November, 1925. (Confidential). File No. 47637.

(5) Appointment Commission of Enquiry. Correspondence Greco-Bulgarian Mixed Commission and Director Political Section League of Nations. 30 October and 4 November, 1925. File No. 47451.

(6) Report of the League Commission of Enquiry. 3 December, 1925. (Various stages of preparation). File No. 47802.

(7) Archives of the League Commission of Enquiry on the Greco-Bulgarian Incident:

(i) Documents communicated by the Bulgarian authorities. File No. 48129.

(ii) Documents communicated by the Greek authorities. File No. 48130.

(iii) Documents communicated by the British, French and Italian Military Attachés. Belgrade. File No. 48131.

(iv) Procès Verbaux and Résumé prepared by the Commission of Enquiry. File No. 48132.

(v) Appeals and Complaints addressed to the Commission of Enquiry. File No. 48133.

(vi) Documents communicated by the Greco-Bulgarian Reciprocal Mixed Commission. File No. 48135.

(vii) Documents concerning Bulgarian Claims. File No. 48136.

(viii) Letters and Telegrams Despatched and Received by the Commission of Enquiry. File Nos. 48137 and 48138.

(ix) Procès Verbaux des réunions tenues par la Commission d'Enquête à Genève pendant la session due Conseil, 6 December 1925. File No. 48369.

(8) Record of Proceedings at Private Informal Meeting of the Council. (27 October, 1925). Confidential. File No. 47477.

(9) Appointment of the President of the Commission of Conciliation. Report to the Council of Neutral Officers. August, 1927. File No. 61482.

(9a) Confidential Correspondence Respecting Prolongation of the Mission of the Neutral Officers Appointed to Assist in the Reorganisation of the Frontier. File No. 61169.

(10) Proposal to Adjourn Nomination President Neutral Commission Envisaged by Resolution of 14 December, 1925 by Neutral Officers, Sofia, 4 September 1926.

(11) Nomination de deux officers suédois en vue de la réorganisation en séance des gardes-frontière. (Correspondence between 18.7.1927 - 17.1.1929). File No. 48599.

(12) Incident in Thrace between Komitini and Dedeagatch. (May - June 1927). Confidential. File No. 59500.

(13) Correspondence règlement concernant la service de garde-frontière. Colonels Lindh and Siefvert, Salonika, 6 October 1926. File No. 54914.

B. Published Sources

a. League of Nations Publications: Official Journal (Council Minutes).

(1) Thirty-Sixth (Extraordinary) Session (26-30 October, 1925). 5 Meetings. November 1925, pp. 1693-1720.

(2) Thirty-Seventh Session (7-16 December, 1925). 2 Meetings. February 1926. pp. 108-118 and Annex 815, pp. 196-209.

(3) Thirty-Ninth Session Third Meeting. 15 March 1926. p. 506 and 507. Annexes 851, 851 a, 851 b, 851 c, pp. 582-584.

(4) Forty-First Session (2-7 September 1926). Fifth Meeting. p. 1246, and Annexes 907, 907 a and 907 b, pp. 1396-1397.

(5) Forty-Second Session (16-20 September 1926). Second Meeting. p. 1403 and Annex 909, p. 1420.

(6) Forth-Third Session (6-11 December 1926). Fifth Meeting. p. 153. Annexes 929, 929 a and 929 b.

(7) Forth-Fifth Session (13-17 June 1927). Fourth Meeting. p. 776. Annexes 968, 968 a and 968 b.

(8) Forty-Sixth Session (1-15 September 1927). Third Meeting. p. 1112. Annexes 981, 981 a, p. 1221.

(9) Forty-Seventh Session (17-28 September 1927). Fifth Meeting. p. 1417. Annexes 992, 992 a and 992 b.

(10) Forty-Ninth Session (5-10 March 1928). First Meeting. p. 371.

b. League of Nations Treaty Series

(1) Convention between Greece and Bulgaria respecting Reciprocal Emigration, signed at Neuilly-sur-seine, 27 November 1919. (Letter from the Mixed Greco-Bulgarian Emigration Commission). Athens, 28 July 1922. No. 9. 1922. Vol. II. pp. 351-352.

(2) Protocol relating to the Settlement of Refugees in Greece and the Creation for this purpose of a Refugee Settlement Commission, signed at Geneva, 29 September 1923. Annex No. 503. 1923. Volume 20. pp. 31-39.

(3) Treaty of Peace, signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1923. No. 701. 1924. Volume 28. pp. 11-17. Vol.III

(3a) Treaty of Sèvres between Greece and the Allies, 1923./

(4) Convention relating to the Régime of Straits, signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1923. No. 207. 1924. Volume 28. pp. 117-137.

(5) Convention respecting the Thracian Frontier, signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1923. No. 703. 1924. Volume 28. pp. 139 - 149.

(6) Protocol relating to the Treaty concluded at Sèvres, 10 August 1920, concerning the Protection of Minorities in Greece and to the Treaty concluded at Sèvres, 10 August 1920 relating to Thrace, signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1924. No. 709. 1924. Volume 28. p. 223.

(7) Treaty concerning the Protection of Minorities in Greece, signed at Sèvres, 10 August 1920, No. 711. 1924. Volume 28. pp. 245-265.

(8) Treaty concerning Thrace, signed at Sèvres, 10 August 1920. No. 710. 1924. Volume 28. pp. 227-242.

(9) Proposal relating to the Protection of Greek Minorities in Bulgaria. Geneva. 29 September 1924. No. 737. 1924. Volume 29. pp. 119-121.

(10) Proposal relating to the Protection of Bulgarian Minorities in Greece. Geneva. 29 September 1924. No. 739. Volume 29. pp. 125-127.

(11) Additional Act to the Protocol of 29 September 1923, relating to the Settlement of Greek Refugees, signed at Geneva. 19 September 1924. No. 776. 1924-5. Volume 30. pp. 415-419.

(12) Protocol concerning the Settlement by means of a lump sum of the cost of the Interallied Occupation in Bulgaria, signed at Sofia, 28 March 1924. No. 780. 1924-5. Volume 31. pp. 47-51.

(13) Protocol concerning the Settlement of Refugees in Bulgaria, signed at Geneva. 9 September 1926. No. 1375. 1926-7. Volume 58. pp. 247-257.

(c) Publications of the Permanent Court of International Justice

(1) Interpretation of the Greco-Bulgarian Agreement of 9 December 1927, (Caphandaris-Molloff Agreement). Advisory opinion. 8 March 1932. Series A/B. No. 45. pp. 68-91.

(2) The Greco-Bulgarian "Communities", Advisory opinion. 31 July 1930. Series B. No. 17. pp. 4-46.

II. DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

A. Official Documents

(1) Enquête sur les Evénements de Tarlis, Documents. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et des Cultes de Bulgarie, Imprimerie de l'Etat, Sofia, 1924.

(2) Hypourgeion Oikonomikon, Les Finances de la Grèce pendant la Guerre. Ministère des finances. Athènes. 1919.

(3) Hypourgeion exoterikon, Répertoire général des accords internationaux conclus par la Grèce. Etabli par Alexandre T. Sgourdéos. Athens. 1938.

(4) Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, Records of Proceedings and Draft Terms of Peace (with Map). His Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1923.

(5) Agreement for the Settlement of the War Debt of Greece to Great Britain, with an exchange of letters between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Greek Minister in London. His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1927.

(6) A Handbook of Bulgaria. Compiled by the Geographical Section of the Naval Intelligence Division. H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1920.

(7) The Internal Situation in Greece and the Amnesty of Political Offenders, Speech of E. Venizelos in the Greek Chamber, April 23/May 6 1920. (A literal translation from the Official Report), The Greek Bureau of Foreign Information, London. 1920.

(8) Le Départ du Roi Constantin, Documents. Publication de l'Union Hellénique de Suisse. Genève, 1917.

(9) Greece before the Peace Congress, Pamphlet, printed by the Greek government. Undated. Political Files of the United Nations Library.

B. Unofficial Documentary Sources

(1) Azacárate, P. de The League of Nations and National Minorities: an experiment. Washington, 1945.

(1a) Temperley, H.W.V. (Ed.), A History of the Peace Conference of Paris, Institute of International Affairs, Hodder and Straughton, London, Vols. I - VI, 1920, 1921 and 1924.

(2) Toynbee, A. (Ed.), Survey of International Affairs (1925-1927), 208 Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, London, 1928 and 1929.

(3) Toynbee, A. The Western Question in Greece and Turkey, a study in the Contact of Civilisation. Constable. London. 2nd Edition, 1923.

(4) Tyler, M.W. The European Powers and the Near East, (1875-1908), University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1925.

(5) Walters, F. A History of the League of Nations. Royal Institute of International Affairs. London, 1952. 2 Vols.

(6) International Conciliation. Documents for the year 1925. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. New York. 1926.

(7) A Survey (1920-1926). League Secretariat Information Service. Geneva. 1927.

(8) Bulgaria and the Balkan Problems, Bulgarian Group for the Balkan Conferences. Sofia. 1934.

(9) The Balkan States, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, London, 1936.

III. STUDIES

A. General

(1) Abbot, G.F. Greece and the Allies (1914-1922). Methuen, London, 1922.

(2) Alexander, H.G. The League of Nations and the Operation of Minority Treaties. Friends' Book Centre. London, 1926.

(3) Barros, J. The Aaland Question: its settlement by the League of Nations. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968.

(4) Bassett, J.S. League of Nations, A Chapter in World Politics. Longmans Green. London, 1928.

(5) Barker, E. Macedonia and its place in Balkan's Power, Royal Institute of International Affairs. London, 1950.

(6) Bourquin, M. Dynamism and the Machinery of International Institutions. Geneva Studies, Vol. XI. No. 5. 1940.

(7) Bralisford, H.N. Olives of Endless Age, This distracted world and its need for unity. Harper and Brothers. New York, 1928.

(8) Chamberlain, Sir Austen. Peace in our Times, Addresses on Europe and the Empire. D. Allan, London, 1935.

(9) Duroselle, J.B. Histoire diplomatique de 1919 à nos Jours. Dalloz, Paris, 1962.

(10) Elisha, A. Aristide Briand: discours et écrits de Politique étrangère, Plon, Paris, 1965.

(11) Geshkoff, T.I. Balkan Union, a Road to Peace in South-Eastern Europe. Colombia University Press, New York, 1940.

(12) Gooch, G.P. The History of Modern Europe (1878-1919). Carrall, London, 1923.

(13) Guggenheim, Paul, "Legal and Political Conflicts in the League of Nations," in The World Crisis, Graduate Institute of International Studies. Geneva, 1938.

(14) Heatley, D.P. Diplomacy and the Study of International Relations. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1919.

(15) Herbert, S. and Webster, C.K. The League of Nations in Theory and Practice. Allen and Unwin, London, 1933.

(16) Hesse, R. Aristide Briand; premier Européen, F. Sorlot, Paris, 1939.

(17) Ladas, P.S. The Exchange of Minorities, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, Bureau of International Research, Harvard University and Radcliffe College, Macmillan, New York, 1932.

(18) Rémond, P. Le Règlement Pacifique des Conflit internationaux par la Société des Nations (1920-1926). Editions de la Revue Mondiale. Paris, 1927.

(19) Ludwig, E. Leaders of Europe, Ivor Nicholson and Watson. London, 1934.

(20) Myers, D.P. Handbook of the League of Nations. World Peace Foundation. Boston, 1935.

(21) Morley, F. The Society of Nations, its Organisation and Constitutional Development. Brookings Institutions. Washington, 1932.

(22) Phillimore, W.G.F. Schemes for Maintaining General Peace. His Majesty's Stationery Office. London, 1920.

(23) Rappard, W. International Relations as viewed from Geneva, Yale University Press. New Haven, 1925.

(24) Schwarzenberger, G. The League of Nations and World Order; a Treatise on the Principles of Universality in the Theory and Practice of the League of Nations. Constable. London, 1936.

(25) Shevill, F. The History of the Balkan Peninsula. from the earliest times to the present day, Revised Edition. Harcourt Brace Company. New York, 1933.

(26) Shotwell, J.T. At the Paris Peace Conference. Macmillan. New York, 1957.

(27) Shotwell, J.T. and Salvia, M. Lessons from Security and Disarmament from the History of the League of Nations. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York, 1949.

B. Specific

(1) Ancel, J. La Macédoine, son évolution contemporaine, De la Graves, 1930.

(1a) Barros, J. The League of Nations and the Great Powers: the Greek-Bulgarian Incident 1925, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1970.

(2) Driault, E. and L'héritier, M. Histoire diplomatique de la Grèce de 1821 à nos jours. Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1925/26.

(3) Dertilis, P. La Reconstruction financière de la Grèce et la S.D.N. Rousseaux, Paris, 1928.

(4) Desbons, G. La Bulgarie après la Traité de Neuilly. M. Rivière. Paris, 1930.

(5) Frangulis, A.F. L'hellénisme en lutte contre l'orient et l'occident. (Les traités de Sèvres et de Lausanne, appel aux nations liberales). Imprimerie Franco-Hellénique, Athènes, 1925.

(6) Frangulis, A.F. La Grèce et la crise mondiale. F. Alçon. Paris, 1926.

(7) Genov, G.P. Bulgaria and the Treaty of Neuilly. Methuen, Sofia, 1935.

(8) Gerando, F. de L'Incident gréco-bulgaire d'octobre 1925. Notes d'un témoin. Imprimerie de la Cour. Sofia, 1926.

(9) Ianouloff, I. La Traité de Neuilly et la Bulgarie Economique, Assocation Bulgare pour la Paix et la Société des Nations, Sofia, 1929.

(9a) Ivanov, I. Les Bulgares et leurs manifestations nationales, documents historiques, ethnographiques. P. Haupt, Berne, 1919.

(10) Kiproff, A. La vérité sur la Bulgarie, Berne, 1918.

(11) Mileff, M. La Bulgarie et les détroits, essai d'histoire diplomatique. Sonue. Paris, 1927.

(12) Monroe, W.S. Bulgaria and her People (with an Account of the Balkan Wars, Macedonia and the Macedonian Bulgars), Boston, 1914.

(13) Mantoux, P. Quelques Réflexions sur l'incident Gréco-Bulgare. Société des Nations, Pamphlets on the League of Nations. No. 2. February 1926, pp. 293-298.

(14) Movrogodarato, I. Modern Greece, Macmillan, London, 1931.

(15) Poppov, J. La Dobrodja et les relations Bulgaro-Rumaines, Imprimerie George Thone, Liège, 1935.

(16) Prost, H. La Bulgarie de 1912 à 1930: contribution économique et financière de la guerre et de ses conséquences. Editions Pierre Roger. Paris, 1932.

(17) Sarailieff, G.V. Le Conflit Gréco-Bulgare d'octobre 1925 et règlement par S.D.N. Amsterdam, 1927.

(18) Stephanove, C. The Question of Thrace, Paul Haupt, Librarie Académique, Berne, 1919.

(19) Swire, J. Bulgarian Conspiracy, Robert Hale, London, 1939.

(20) Wurfbain, A. L'Echange Gréco-Bulgare des Minorités Ethniques, Payot, Lausanne, 1930.

C. Articles

(1) Armstrong, H.F. "The Saloniki Dispute", Foreign Affairs, September 1925 - July 1926.

(1a) Barros, J. "The Greek Bulgarian Incident of 1925: The League of Nations and the Great Powers". Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Volume 108, No. 4, August 1964.

(2) Durham, M.E. "The Balkans as a Danger Point", (Résumé of a paper read on 1 April 1924). Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1924/5, Volume III and IV. pp. 139-144.

(3) Mantoux, P. "On the procedure of the Council of the League of Nations for the Settlement of Disputes" (Paper read on 19 November, 1925), Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol. 5, 1926.

(4) "Interpretation of the Treaty of Neuilly, 1925" (Judgement No.3). The British Year Book of International Law. 1925. Volume VI, pp. 195-196.

(5) Garner, J.W. "Settlement of the Greco-Bulgarian Dispute". The American Journal of International Law, Volume 20 1926. pp. 337-339.

(6) Document, "Bulgarie et Gréce", Revue générale de Droit international public. Tome XXXIII. 1926. pp. 564-578.

(7) Drummond, Sir Eric, "The Secretariat of the League of Nations". Public Administration. Vol. IX, No. 2, 1931.

(8) Shotwell, J.T. "A Turning Point in History", International Conciliation, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 1927, No. 229. pp. 149-162.

(9) "Greco-Bulgar: the action of the League in the Greco-Bulgarian Affair". Contemporary Review, London, January-June 1926. pp. 39-47.

(10) "Pacifying the Balkans". The Saturday Review, London, 31 October 1925, pp. 140-497.

(11) Myers, D.P. "The Modern System of Pacific Settlement of International Disputes". Political Science Quarterly. New York, Volume 16, 1931, pp. 548-588.

(12) Testis, "Le Règlement de l'Incident Gréco-Bulgare". Revue des deux mondes, Paris, 15 February 1926. Tome 31, pp. 909-920.

(13) "La Situation en Bulgarie", l'association des correspondants de Journaux Bulgares à Paris. Paris 1926.

D. Newspapers

The Times, London.
The New York Times, New York
Gazette de Lausanne, Lausanne
L'Europe Nouvelle, Paris
Bulletin of International News, London
Journal de Genève, Geneva
Le Messager d'Athènes, Athens
Politika, Belgrade

E. MAPS

Horrabin, J.F. An Atlas of European History, from the 2nd to the 20th century, Victor Gollancz, London, 1935.

Robertson, G. and Bartholomew, J. A Historical Atlas of Modern Europe, from 1789 to 1922. Oxford University Press, 1924.

Haack, H. Stieler's Hand Atlas, J. Gotha, Perthes, 1926.

Helaiz, A. New Central Europe in Economical Maps, R. Gergely, Budapest, 1928.

INDEX

Barros, James, 9.
Bateman, H. Charles, 144.
Boncour, Paul, 198.
Boshkovitch, 99.
Boyd, Andrew, 110.
Bratiano, 97.
Briand, Aristide, 13, 106, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 118
120, 131, 138, 139, 140, 141, 156, 201,
204, 226, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234.
Caftanzolow, Lysimachoa, 76.
Cambon, 95.
Carapanos, Alexandros, 108, 115, 118, 121, 123, 137,
138, 142.
Chamberlain, Austin Sir, 13, 106, 116, 118, 137, - 140,
146, 174, 187, 188, 189, 190,
194, 196, 197, 201, 215, 216,
223, 226, 227, 230, - 234, 239.
Cheetham, Milne Sir, 76.
Constantine II (Patriarch), 66, 67.
Curzon, Lord, 56, 49.
Deltel, 129.
Dendarmis, 123.
Drummond, Eric Sir, 13, 107, 109, - 111, 123, 125, 140,
141, 143, - 145, 155, 156, 189, 191,
212, 213, 228, 230, 231, 235, - 239.
Duca, John, 120.
Ferrario (General), 150.
Giles, 129.
Foleminov, 71.
Gueshoff, 44.
Hadjikyriakos, Alexandros, 68, 74, - 76, 109, 128, 142, 144.
Hoover (President), 220.
Hymans, Paul, 188, 190, 191.
Ishii, K.,(Viscount), 100, 140, 156, 188.
Kalfoff, 79, 80, 109, 128, 141, 174, 175, - 179, 187, 198.
Kanakis, 128.
Mantoux, Paul, 123, 132, 213.
Marinoff, 26.
Marfoff, 115, 121, 136, 143.
Mickalakoupoulis, 65.
Minkoff, 26, 77, 102.
Morgenthau, 104.
Pangalos (General), 27, 67, - 69, 78, 122, 124, 126,
144, 160.
Pasha, Ismet, 56.
Papazov, 108.
Plastiras (General), 127.
Politis, 96.

Rappard, W.E., 1, 2, 83, 110.
Rascano, Langa, 122, 124.
Rentis, Constantine, 174, 179, 180, 182, - 187, 190, 192, 193, 198.
Rosetti-Bibica, Raoul, 26, 73, 75, 77.
Rumbold, Horace Sir, 149, 154, - 156, 187, 190, 191, 193.
Salter, Arthur Sir, 60, 189, 232.
Sarailieff, G.V., 8.
Scialoja, Vittorio, 140, 141, 174, 194.
Sergios, 71, 72.
Siotakis, 22, 23.
Sophoulis, 64.
Stambuliisky, 44, 46, 56, 59, 60, 61, 93, 99, 97.
Tasakoff, 44.
Theodoroff, 108.
Tsanoff, 199.
Undén, Östen, 80, 81, 108, 140.
Vassiliadis, 17, 19, 22, 72, 133, 137, 158, 163, 164.
Venizelos, 56, 57, 61, 62, 69.
Vigier, P., 123.
Visconti, 129.
Zalateff, 128.

Imprimé sur presse Heidelberg, Genève 1974